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## WALES

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# WALES

## HER ORIGINS STRUGGLES AND LATER HISTORY INSTITUTIONS AND MANNERS

BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE
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LONDON
GEORGE G. HARRAP & COMPANY
2 & 3 PORTSMOUTH STREET KINGSWAY W.C.
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ELIZABETH STONE

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*Printed at the Ballantyne Press London England*

# INTRODUCTION

ON no historical subject is the modern mind, saturated as it is with a superficial philosophy of Imperialism, so apt to go astray, and with dire consequences, as on the question of nationality. Sometimes the term ' nation ' is used even by statesmen and philosophers with a mere territorial or geographical significance, and made to include such widely divergent and utterly unrelated phenomena as, for instance, the Tyrolese and the Germans ; at other times it is used synonymously with the much more modern and artificial term ' state.' The reason for this confusion is obvious. A nation, like most of the simple and elemental things of our experience, does not readily admit of definition, although the phenomenon itself is perfectly easy to recognize. When we take into consideration the nations of the West as we know them to-day, in a more or less complex state of development, we find it almost impossible to discover anything in the nature of a common denominator, a deciding characteristic for all of them. A common racial origin, a distinct language, political independence, peculiar and definite customs and traditions, a homeland with an unbroken and independent history, religious affinity, military unity, have all of them been suggested as distinguishing characteristics, but on application to concrete instances all of them fail. A modern poet came nearer the truth than all the philosophers when he said that " a community of memories and of hopes " is the common characteristic of all nations, but even this loose and spiritual definition requires, if not modification, at least restatement.

Just as certain natural forces when brought into play under certain conditions produce certain characteristic results, so

also certain historical processes produce well-defined and easily recognizable results called ' nations.'

These processes are always at work, and new nations are being continually called into existence, while old nations decay, disintegrate, and disappear.

Nationality, from an evolutionary point of view, may only be a phase in a particular process of development, starting with the family and ending ultimately with the world-empire ; and, indeed, a certain type of philosopher is never tired of reminding us that in the interests of the human race generally the process needs accelerating : to them the Empire is a great deal nearer the ideal than the Nation, a proposition, for many reasons, demanding considerable demonstration, and with which we are not concerned. In this historical study the author's purpose has been to outline the processes which have been at work in the making of a peculiar and characteristic phenomenon—Welsh Nationality.

Some people would very likely deny what to us appears to be an incontrovertible fact, that Wales of to-day is a distinct nation, and in support of their attitude would cite its relationship to the United Kingdom and to the British Empire. They would maintain, and with some truth, that at any rate since the Tudor period it has shared the same fortunes as England. Its political and social system is much the same as that of the United Kingdom generally, and its needs and interests are identical with those of the other territorial units in the kingdom. None of these propositions would be correct without very considerable qualification, but, admitting their strict accuracy for the sake of argument, it is still certain that they are all irrelevant considerations.

Any person not of the country itself but coming into Wales from the outside is immediately conscious of the fact that he has entered a strange country. It may well be that he has come into a district which, like Ireland, speaks the English language ; still none the less will he feel that the people are in some strange and subtle way in permanent contrast with the English people themselves. It would be difficult to define

the difference in any detail; most people would be content to say that it was in atmosphere, which means little or nothing. But we know the causes which have produced the effect—the different forces which have been at work in moulding the character of the people of the Principality: they have believed and worked for things of their own; they have lived and died for their own distinct ideals; their memories are different, and so, to a large extent, are their dreams and their hopes; and he who comes to them from other lands and other peoples immediately becomes aware of this independence of soul, if not of political organization.

Then there is a still more important fact. The Welsh people themselves are generally conscious of their independent nationality. It is this consciousness that makes nations. This raised Bohemia from being a mere racial group into the dignity of nationhood. This consciousness of unity and independence at a great political crisis welded together the infinitely diverse elements of the United States and made a nation of the clashing factions. This consciousness kept Norway alive through all diplomacies and political exigencies until at last through the medium of literature the whole of Europe awoke to its national existence. It is this inward certainty of the soul that has made Ireland the chief and most difficult problem in British politics for many centuries. More, possibly, than any other force has this wrought miracles in history—from the days of the revolt of Israel against the Empire down to our times. We may deride and condemn it, as Turkey did with the Balkan States; we may ignore it, as England did with Ireland; we may for a time crush it with a tyrant's recklessness, as Austria did with Italy or Germany with Belgium; in the end it will prove its power and win. Alone it is the supreme test of nationality; and it exists in modern Wales, and is perhaps stronger to-day than at any other period of the nation's history because it is more universal —because it has captured the soul of the peasantry.

We have already said that in the case of the Principality different forces have been at work. It is too commonly

thought that since what is generally known as the Conquest of 1282 Wales has travelled historically along the same lines as England. This book will show how misleading such a conception is, how at almost every single great crisis in our history this consciousness of independence of which we have spoken has asserted itself and led the Welsh people a way of their own.

At no time in the history of our civilization has it been more important that a great Empire and its citizens should understand the true import and significance of this kind of individualist development—to see clearly why and how in national life different causes produce different and distinctive results, why and how different moulding forces produce different attitudes and different needs; and it is on the ground that in this book we find this great and important truth set out that I commend it not only to Welsh readers, who will naturally be deeply interested in it, but also to a much wider circle of readers—to the British public.

ELLIS J. GRIFFITH

# PREFACE

THE history of Wales, which stretches back as far as that of any nation in Europe, and which presents to the student of peoples some most interesting problems, has been singularly neglected by historians until comparatively recent years. The direct ancestors of the Welsh were offering sacrifices to their gods in Britain thousands of years before our era. The Welsh are, indeed, descended from races which conquered a large part of Western Europe, Albion, and Ireland; their immediate ascendants, the Britons, opposed Caesar's landing and lived long under Rome's government, learning their lessons in Roman schools and pleading before Roman judges; they fought stubbornly and for centuries against the barbarian Saxons, struggling as few people have had to struggle to preserve a great and widespread civilization. This people, driven back at last by force of overwhelming numbers to the mountains of Cymru, still held the flag of liberty aloft, met in succession and successfully Saxon and Angle and Dane, Norseman and Norman, until at last, worn out and embruted by centuries of warfare, they succumbed to the Norman castle-builders, as more than twelve hundred years before their ancestors had succumbed to the block-houses and forts of Frontinus and Agricola.

A history of such an ancient people should be deeply interesting, yet until the middle of the nineteenth century there were singularly few histories produced relating to Wales or to Welsh movements. With the *Annales Cambriae* and the *Brut y Tywysogion* as foundation, the works of cleric chroniclers such as Caradog of Llancarvan, a few later writers made some effort to tell the story of their country. Humphrey

Llwyd, Powel, and Wynne, working in turn on the primary authorities and editing the work of their predecessor, prevented Welsh history from falling into complete neglect. Some few others, such as Edward Lhuyd in the seventeenth, Pennant and Warrington toward the end of the eighteenth, and Merrick in the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, carried on, in a partial manner, the good work.

As the nineteenth century progressed several fresh workers came into the field. The publication of the *Myvyrian Archæology of Wales* in 1801–7 had supplied subsequent writers with much good material, but it was not until the foundation of the third Cymmrodorion Society in 1873 that any great historical movement took place, although already B. B. Woodward (1853) and Miss Williams ('Ysgafell') (1869) had produced bulky volumes on this subject. From the seventies onward the flow of works upon general and particular Welsh history became more and more considerable. Any adequate notice of modern writers is not possible within the limits of these pages, but every student of Welsh history owes a deep debt of gratitude to the Cymmrodorion Society and to the Cambrian Archæological Society. Within the last twenty years, thanks largely to the researches conducted by a comparatively small body of enthusiastic scholars, our knowledge of Welsh history has been very greatly extended. Improved texts of the *Brut y Tywysogion* and the *Ancient Laws of Wales* have recently been issued, and it may be that the time will soon arrive when Welsh history has a bibliography commensurate with its importance.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to treat of the history of Wales from the earliest times to the present day. The work is, however, chiefly concerned with the doings of the Welsh up to the Act of Union (1535). Thence onward events are surveyed less closely, except that an occasional pause is made for the purpose of noting some great and important national movement.

I am fully conscious of the fact that throughout the work many statements are made dogmatically which in the present

state of our knowledge are highly debatable. Thus I regard the earlier people who lived in Britain as belonging to the Semitic race. I use this term conventionally. Many writers employ the term 'Iberian.' This is unfortunate for two reasons: (1) There is no sufficient ground for connecting the Neolithics of Britain with the Iberian rather than with any other of the so-called Mediterranean races; (2) the word is misleading, since it turns our attention to the Spanish peninsula for no very obvious or cogent reason. Other writers refer to the Mediterranean races. This has the advantage of being non-committal and the disadvantage of being vague. Others direct our attention to the Libyan tribe of the Hamitic family. These last writers seem to be best supported by the available evidence, and I have long pondered a change from 'Semitic' to 'Hamitic,' especially since I am at pains to show the connexion between Neolithic man and Egyptian culture. The term 'Hamitic' is, however, vague and liable to be misconstrued, since several negroid races fall within that group. Again, as I point out in the body of the work, Neolithic culture, such as it was, was not improbably connected with that which flowed from the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates. This point of view, I think, is best brought into prominence by the use of the term 'Semitic,' but it must be understood that that term is used conventionally to denote men racially connected either with the Hamitics of Egypt or Libya or with the Semitics proper.

Another point must be made clear. The title 'Briton' is to-day borne by many peoples in many lands, few of whom, probably, realize that, strictly speaking, it is the Welshman alone who is entitled to that name. When in olden times the Anglo-Saxon chroniclers referred to their enemies the Britons they used the term 'Wealas' or 'Bret-Wealas.' When in 1870 the German historian von Treitschke spoke of the Frenchmen of Lorraine he used the term 'Wälsch,' inelegantly translated in *Elsass and Lothringen Past and Present* as 'Welsh.' Both terms expressed the same notion

of enmity. The Welshman was the Saxon's enemy, but he was a Briton-enemy.

This fact that the Briton, the Briton of that Britain which the Teutons invaded, was the ancestor of the modern Welshman must be borne in mind, otherwise the treatment of the earlier chapters of the book may be regarded as confused. Since this work has been designed in such a manner that an impression, however imperfect, may be obtained of the underlying causes which have resulted in the development of the Welsh national character, it has been necessary to consider the history of the Welsh people rather than the history of that geographical area now known as Wales. Until the fifth century of our era the Welsh people were mainly found in Britain rather than in Cymru. The earlier chapters are therefore concerned with the inhabitants of Britain as a whole.

A further result flowed from the desire to depict the gradual development of Welsh nationality. In the happiest of circumstances it is not easy to provide an adequate picture of a people by a mere recital of wars, of political events, or of the intrigues or accomplishments of princes and statesmen. When one is considering the history of the Welsh people the difficulties, owing to several causes, chief of which are the scantiness of the original authorities, the nature of their compilation, and the date at which they were reduced to their present form, become almost insuperable. An endeavour has therefore been made to obtain an idea of the character of the ancient Welsh by a consideration of matters other than those which fall within the scope of a political history, using that term in its strictest sense. Their religion, laws, customs, and poetry have at least been glanced at.

The spelling of Welsh names is always a difficulty, and it may aid the non-Welsh reader to follow the plan adopted if the following points are made clear :

The forms Gruffydd, Maredudd, Owain, Howel, Conan, and Llywelyn are consistently used. Exception, however, is made in the case of Gruffydd ap Cynan (instead of Conan) and Gruff*u*dd (instead of Gruff*y*dd), the son of Llywelyn the

Great (with the consequent spelling of Llywelyn Prince of Wales' name as Llywelyn ap Gruffudd). The purpose of these variations is to distinguish those important characters from other persons in Welsh history who bore similar names. The spelling of less common names has occasionally been varied also, chiefly because of a difference of period.

The following is a list of English equivalents for Welsh names, taken in the main from the recently published *Llyfr Baglan* of John Williams (edited by J. A. Bradney, F.S.A.):

Cadwgan = Cadogan
Goronwy or Grono = Stephen
Gruffydd or Gruffudd = Griffith
Gwilym = William
Ieuan, Ieun = Evan
Iorwerth = Edward
Maredudd = Meredith
Meurig = Merrick
Owain = Owen = Eugene
Price = ap Rice (or Rhys)
Rhydderch or Rhodri = Roderick
Rhys = Rees or Reece
Rinallt = Reginald
Tewdwr = Tudor = Theodore
Vychan = Vaughan = Little (or 'the Junior')

Nest, a common feminine name, comes from *nes, nessa*, 'near,' 'nearest,' and probably meant 'dear.'

Welsh names are sometimes lengthy, men identifying themselves by reference to their father and grandfather. 'Ap,' meaning 'son of,' is a late form, being a corruption of 'map,' 'mab,' and is sometimes written 'ab.' It is connected with the Goidelic or Gaelic 'mac.' For daughter, following John Williams, the contraction 'vz,' which comes from 'verch' or 'ferch,' meaning 'daughter,' is used.

The spelling of place-names has been checked with Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, but if errors or inconsistencies exist the fault is mine.

Among the many works to which I am indebted for information, the following have been found particularly useful:

(1) On the ancient period: *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, Dr. T. R. E. Holmes' *Ancient Britain*; Sir John Rhys' *Celtic Britain* and *Celtae and Galli*; Professor Haverfield's *Military*

*Aspects of Roman Wales*; Sir John Rhys and Sir David Brynmor Jones' *The Welsh People*; the late Dr. Hodgkin's *Political History of England*, vol. i; Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson's *Keltic Researches*; Dr. P. W. Joyce's *A Social History of Ancient Ireland*; Mr. T. W. Rolleston's *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race*; Sir Norman Lockyer's *Stonchenge*; Mr. E. M. Nelson's *The Cult of the Circle-Builders*; M. Rœssler de Graville's *L'Art Celtique*; M. Déchelette's *Manuel d'Archéologie préhistorique*; Mr. J. Romilly Allen's *Celtic Art in Pagan and Christian Times*; and the various antiquarian journals, in particular *Archæologia*, *Archæologia Cambrensis*, and the *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*.

(2) On the middle period: Pre-eminently Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, selections from which have been used by the courtesy of the author and the publishers, Messrs. Longmans, Green, and Co. The *Brut y Tywysogion* and the *Annales Cambriae* have formed the basis for the whole of this period, except the life of Gruffydd ap Cynan, for which I have used *Hanes Gruffydd ap Cynan* (edited by Mr. Arthur Jones). Also Sir H. C. Hoare's translation of the *Itinerary of Giraldus Cambrensis*; Dr. Henry Owen's *Gerald the Welshman*; *Gualteri Mapes de Nugis, etc.* (edited by T. Wright) (a later edition, edited by Dr. James, has recently been published); Professor Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales*; Mr. G. T. Clark's *Mediæval Military Architecture*; Sir R. W. Payne-Gallwey's *Projectile-throwing Engines of the Ancients*; *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* and *Y Cymmrodor* (particularly Mr. Nicholson's article on Genealogies).

Upon the Arthurian legends works by the following authors have been found of great value: Miss Jessie L. Weston, Sir John Rhys, Mr. Alfred Nutt, Dr. Leo Landau, Mr. Stuart Glennie, Mr. W. W. Comfort, and Mr. W. H. Dickinson. Lady Charlotte Guest's translation of the *Mabinogion* has been used, in conjunction with Mr. Alfred Nutt's *Mabinogion* and Sir John Rhys' articles in the *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*.

(3) On the last period: The *Statutes at Large*; the *Calendar*

*and Patent Rolls*; Sir H. Ellis' *Original Letters*; Miss C. A. J. Skeel's *The Council of the Marches in Wales*; Mr. J. A. Wylie's *History of England under Henry IV* (and the recently published part on Henry V); Thomas Pennant's *Tours in Wales*; Mr. A. G. Bradley's *Owen Glyndwr*; 'Owen Rhoscomyl's' article in the *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*; Sir John Rhys and Sir David Brynmor Jones' *The Welsh People*; David Powel's *Historie of Cambria*; Mr. H. T. Evans' *History of England and Wales*; Mr. O. M. Edwards' *Wales*; 'Maelog's' *Poems of Davyth ap Gwilym*; Edward Jones' *Poetical Relicks of Welsh Bards*; and the Rev. W. M. Morris' *The Renaissance of Welsh Literature*.

For the Note on coins Sir John Evans' *British Coins* has been almost entirely relied upon. On the laws of Wales, to which some prominence is given, the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales* (Record Commission), together with Mr. Frederick Seebohm's *Tribal System in Wales*, have been mainly used.

I must express my thanks to the Right Honourable Ellis J. Griffith, K.C., M.P., for his Introduction to the book; the Right Honourable Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., K.C., for permission to use parts of certain articles which had appeared from my pen in the *Law Quarterly Review*; Mr. J. Travis Mills, M.A., for much helpful criticism when the work was in proof stage and before; Professor Haverfield for permission to use his map of Roman Wales; Major-General Sir Francis Lloyd, D.S.O., for permission to reproduce the portrait of Humphrey Llwyd in his possession; Mr. John Ballinger, M.A., Librarian of the National Library of Wales, for help in obtaining a reproduction of the twelfth-century Grail manuscript and for various suggestions as to other illustrations; Mr. C. C. Wood for help in revising the proofs and in compiling the Index; the Assistants in the Coin and Manuscript Departments of the British Museum for making casts of coins and adding identifying notes thereon, and for making casts of seals; and, finally, my wife for much help and assistance.

GILBERT STONE

LONDON, 1915

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## PLATES


PLATE

The Welsh Bard — *Frontispiece*

1. Figurine de Brassempouy — 4

From *L'Art Celtique*, by Charles Rœssler, and described by him at pp. 44 *et seq.* It was discovered in 1894 by MM. Rœssler and de Laporterie at Brassempouy. M. Rœssler, though he admits that the style of hair-dressing is Egyptian, says that the face (which is that of a woman) is not typical of that people, but would rather seem to belong to a Mongolian race. The head is very brachycephalic. M. Rœssler dates it as belonging to the somewhat vague period known as the Quaternary. When found it lay 3 m. 80 c. under the surface of the soil. The figurine is carved from a piece of ivory, and it may be that it represents a type present in this island in Neolithic times. Near it lay, among other bones, some rhinoceros teeth. Mammoth teeth were also found near by.

2. Arrow- and Lance-heads of Chipped Flint — 6

Found in Scotland, and now in the British Museum.

3. Finely worked Stone Hammer-head — 8

Probably of the Neolithic period; so symmetrically cut that it would be beyond the skill of any modern flint-worker to chip it. Reproduction from the cast in the British Museum. Found at Maesmore, Corwen, Merionethshire.

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4. Bronze Palstave, Torc, Armlets, and Rings 10

Found in 1825 together at Hollingbury Hill, near Stanmer, Sussex. The two spiral rings, when found, were threaded on the torc. Several armlets of gold have at various times been dug up. The present group is described in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. v, p. 323, where they are attributed to the Bronze Age.

5. (1) Bronze Pan 12

Found at Aylesford. Of fine workmanship, and belonging probably to the Late Celtic period. Described in *Archæologia*, vol. lii, p. 378. In the British Museum.

(2) A thin Bronze Vessel 12

It at one time had handles. Found at the entrance to the earthworks called 'The Berth,' Baschurch, Salop. It probably belongs to the early Iron Age. It may have been used as a water-clock, for, owing to its thinness and the fact that the bottom is pierced with a small hole, it would slowly fill if placed on the surface of water. When a certain mark was reached it would then be refloated by an attendant. This system of telling the time is known to have been practised in India and Ceylon. In the British Museum.

6 Cinerary Vase 14

Found in 1886 with many others in the famous Late Celtic Urn Field at Aylesford, Kent, and described in *Archæologia*, vol. lii, p. 329. It is of fine clay covered with brown-coloured 'varnish.' The foot or pedestal is an unusual feature. Height, 14 in. In the British Museum.

7. Bas-relief relating to the Temple of Sippar 18

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8. Assyrian Boundary Stone 20

Showing a symbolism not dissimilar from that in Plate 7. Fully described, with inscription translated, by Professor King in his monograph *Boundary Stones and Memorial Tablets in the British Museum*. In the British Museum.

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9. Entrance to the Tumulus at New Grange, Ireland 22

This Neolithic burial-place is in many ways remarkable. In size the mound is 280 feet wide and 44 feet high. It is of the chambered type, and the dead whose remains it covered were placed in stone sarcophagi. These were ransacked by the Danes. The large stone shown lying on its side at the entrance is covered with spiral markings not dissimilar from those found on the chalk objects shown in Plate 10 and on many other Neolithic remains. Inside the tomb a solar ship roughly scratched on the walls has been discovered.

10. Food-vessel and Cover and Three Chalk Objects 24

From Neolithic or early Bronze Age barrows. The food-vessel was found at Canton, East Riding of Yorkshire. In these food-vessels, which are commonly found in the barrows, remains of animal and vegetable foods have been discovered. The three lower objects are of chalk, and come from a child's tomb in Yorkshire. They may have been used as idols. They are ornamented with the usual spiral markings, and if the smallest of the three be examined a rude representation of a human face will be seen. Schliemann found somewhat similar markings on vases at Hissarlik. The style of the carving recalls Neolithic and Bronze Age antiquities from the Mediterranean area. These objects are described in *Archæologia*, vol. lii, p. 25, where they are assigned to the Bronze Age. In the British Museum.

11. Bronze Implements, Spear-heads, etc. 38

From Ty Mawr, Holyhead Mountain. They were found with certain other remains in 1832, and are interesting because the type is very similar to those found in Ireland. The whole find is fully described in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxiv, pp. 253 *et seq.* In the British Museum.

12. Bronze Mirror 40

Found about 1833 at Trelan, Bahow, parish of St. Keverne, Cornwall, in a stone grave, with beads, armlets, and other personal ornaments. It belongs to the Late Celtic period. It is circular in form, 6 in. in diameter, with an elegantly designed handle projecting 2½ in. from the edge. When found one side was still quite brightly polished. Both sides of the mirror are flat; one is engraved with a pattern typical of the period. It is described, together with other mirrors of a like period, in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. xxx, p. 267. There is a very similar mirror in the Mayer Museum, Liverpool. In the British Museum.

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13. Bronze and Enamel Shield 42

Found in the river Witham, Lincolnshire. This and an equally fine shield found in the Thames, near Battersea, have been described as the most beautiful examples of Late Celtic art which have come down to us. The shield illustrated is noticeable both for its artistic design and its workmanship. It is decorated with coral studs. The Battersea shield, on the other hand, is ornamented with red enamel and repoussé work; the enamel is still perfect, though the colour appears to have faded somewhat. Enamelling seems to have been very popular with the Brito-Romans, and in the Shrewsbury Museum a large cake of blue enamel found at Viroconium is to be seen. The present shield may date from a period anterior to the coming of the Romans. In the British Museum.

14. The Aylesford Pail 44

So called from the place where found. Probably the wooden part was originally of ash, and would be bound together by the bronze bands, the upper one of which is well ornamented in the Late Celtic style. The part which connects the handle to the pail will be observed to be fashioned in the form of a head, a somewhat unusual form in Late Celtic work. The pail is now in the British Museum, and is described in *Archæologia*, vol. lii, p. 361.

15. A Bilingual Inscription found at Nevern, Pembrokeshire 46

Above the inscription is in Roman characters, below in Ogham writing. It has recently been described by Sir John Rhys, in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 6th Series, vol. xiii, pp. 376 *et seq.* Reference may also be made to the epigraphic notes of the same writer in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 5th Series, vol. xiii, pp. 98 *et seq.*, and his table of Oghams and debased Latin capitals at pp. 297 *et seq.* of the same volume. The reading of the Ogham in the present inscription is "*Maglicunas maqi Clutar . . .*"; the stone then breaks off. It was doubtless a monument to the Goidel Maglocu (or in its Latin form Maglocunus), the son of Clutorios.

16. General View of the Excavations round the Basilica of Viroconium (Uriconium, Wroxeter) 54

In the left-hand foreground are the remains of the hypocaust of the baths. This city was of considerable size, with a circumference of some miles and stretching at least from Wroxeter to the Severn. The ruins, which are some seven miles from Wellington, in Shropshire, are being slowly opened up. Already part of a street,

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showing shops and a blacksmith's forge, has been unearthed, besides the town hall and baths. Among the ruins many objects of Samian, Upchurch, Roman-Salopian, and common ware have been found, also glass vessels, jewellery, tombstones, etc. One of the most interesting finds was an oculist's seal, now in the Shrewsbury Museum.

17. SEATED FIGURE OF A GODDESS 56

Found, together with the sculptured head of a god, at Caerwent, Monmouthshire, in 1908. Carved out of local yellow sandstone, it is probably the work of a local sculptor, as has been stated by M. Espérandieu and the learned writers in *Archæologia*, vol. lxii (1), where, at p. 16, it is described. It is not unlike the Gallo-Roman figures found in France.

18. CAERWENT: THE ROUND TEMPLE 58

Showing the outer wall and east gate, looking north. This interesting Roman ruin was discovered by accident by some workmen digging for stone in September 1912. Some skeletons found in it, evidently of corpses flung there when the temple was already in ruins, probably speak of some Saxon raid. The excavations are described by Mr. A. E. Hudd, F.S.A., in *Archæologia*, vol. lxiv, pp. 437 *et seq.*

19. BILINGUAL SEPULCHRAL MONUMENT 60

Dedicated by Barate, a Palmyrean or Syrian, to his British wife Regina, formerly a freedwoman and of the race of the Catuvellauni. She died at the age of thirty years. Regina is elegantly gowned, and has her jewel-box by her side. Below the Latin inscription the husband has had written in the characters of his native land the short sentence: "Regina, the freedwoman of Barate, alas!" The monument is now in the South Shields Museum, and we are indebted to the Secretary of the Public Library for the photograph from which this reproduction has been made.

20. ROMAN MILESTONE 62

Found at Rhiwiau, Llanfairfechan, co. Carnarvon. It bears the name of the Emperor Hadrian, and was originally set up some eight miles from the Roman station of Canovium in A.D. 121–122. In the British Museum.

21. EXAMPLES OF SAMIAN WARE AND ROMAN CUT GLASS 64

*No.* 1 (numbering from left to right, down): A Gaulish bowl made by the potter Divixtus at Lezouz, Puy-de-Dôme. It was found at Castor, Northants. It belongs to the latter part of the first century. The decoration consists of panels containing human figures; the modelling is vigorous. The type is No. 30. *No.* 2:

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Gaulish bowl made by the potter Cinnamus at Lezouz. Period, middle of the second century. Found at Lincoln. The decoration takes the form of medallions and standing figures. Type No. 37. *No.* 4 : Gaulish bowl made by the potter Meddilus, from La Graufesenque, Aveyron. Period, late first century. Found near London. The formal decoration is lightened with figures of men and animals. Type No. 29. *No.* 5 : A very beautiful Gaulish vase, made at Lezouz. Period, third century. Found at Felixstowe, Suffolk. Ornamented with slip and moulded decorations. Type No. 37. A large number of fragments of Samian and other ware have been found at Viroconium, and bear the marks of a considerable number of potters. *No.* 3 : This rare cup of cut glass comes from a Roman cemetery at Barnwell, Cambridgeshire. All these objects are in the British Museum.

22. ROMAN JUG 66

An elegant example of the more common Roman glass. It was found in a grave at Bayford-next-Sittingbourne, Kent. It is of pale olive-green glass. Height, 9¼ in. It is described in *Archæologia Cantiana*, vol. xvi, p. 2. In the British Museum.

23. ELISEG'S PILLAR 84

Seen from the Concenn Inscription side and with the protecting railings removed. It is fully described by Sir John Rhys in his article *All Around the Wrekin*, in *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xxi, pp. 39 *et seq.* Concenn was possibly the son of Cadell, king of Powys *c.* 800. In the inscription as preserved by Edward Lhuyd, the antiquary, who read it in 1696, we find Cadell given as the son of Brochmail, the son of Eliseg.

24. THE ROUND TABLE AT WINCHESTER HALL 90

Possibly that referred to by Caxton in his Introduction to Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.

25. FACSIMILE OF F. 49B MS. COTTON. VITELL. CIII (BRITISH MUSEUM) 118

The work from which this portion of a page is reproduced deals with leechdoms, wort-cunning, and star-craft, and has been edited by Cockayne. It forms three volumes in the Rolls Series. Although a work concerned primarily with the cures and cunning of the Saxons, it is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the social condition of this island in the tenth century. Immediately above the drawing of a snake appears the word Næðre· The sentence below, beginning with the words Þið næðran, may be translated as follows : " For bite of snake, this wort, which we named cynoglossum, is of good advantage, pounded and swallowed

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in wine." The next paragraph gives a cure for a quartan ague, etc. Besides cures the work contains much information relating to foods, mode of life, etc., in those times.

26. Celtic Cross in Llanbadarn Fawr Churchyard 120

This cross of grey granite is perhaps the finest example of an old Celtic cross in Wales. In its present condition it stands some 8 feet above the ground. One panel contains a rude representation of a human figure, probably some Churchman, for the right hand appears to be raised as in the act of benediction, and in the left hand there would appear to be a pastoral staff. There is another ancient stone monument in the same churchyard, and popular legend informs us that they were the stone flails of Archbishop Sampson. A full account of these early Christian Celtic crosses will be found in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 5th Series, vol. xvi, pp. 1 *et seq.*

27. St. Winifred's (or Wenefrede's) Well 136

This well, which gives its name to Holywell, is named after the virgin Wenefrede, who lived, according to tradition, in the seventh century. She was sister to St. Beuno, under whose care she was placed. A neighbouring prince, won by her beauty, was consumed with passion for her, and when she refused to gratify his desires he drew his sword and struck off her head. The story proceeds to tell us that the prince (Caradoc) instantly fell down dead and was swallowed up by the earth. The head, rolling down the hill upon which the tragedy had occurred, stopped near St. Beuno's Church, and from the spot where it rested a spring of pure water with wonderful healing qualities burst forth. The tale ends on a happy note, for we are told that St. Beuno, taking the head, united it to the body and his sister returned to life. For further details reference may be made to Pennant's *Tours in Wales*, vol. i, p. 44.

28. Offa's Dike 144

The Fosse is seen on the left. One of the earliest references to the Dike occurs in Asser's *Life of Alfred*: "*Fuit in Mercia moderno tempore quidam strenuus, atque universis circa se regibus et regionibus finitimis formidolosus rex, nomine Offa: qui vallum magnum inter Britanniam atque Merciam de mari usque ad mare facere imperavit.*"

29. Remains of the Later Castle of Deganwy 148

Deganwy was for centuries the seat of the royal house of Cunedda, and was the favourite stronghold of Maelgwn Gwynedd in the sixth century. The castle, of which only ruins now remain, is of course of much later date. The ancient hold was abandoned, and is said to have been struck by lightning in 812. The castle was destroyed

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by the English in 822, but was restored by Hugh the Fat, Earl of Chester, and was occupied by Robert of Rhuddlan. It fell into the hands of Llywelyn the Great in 1200, and was destroyed and rebuilt in 1210. It was again destroyed, to be again rebuilt by Henry III in 1245. In 1263 it was captured by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, and passed from him finally at the time of the Edwardian Conquest.

30. MAP OF WALES BY HUMPHREY LLWYD 156

Humphrey Llwyd, the eminent Welsh physician and antiquary, lived 1527–1568. Perhaps this was one of the maps which he dedicated and sent to Ortelius when on his deathbed, accompanying the gift with a letter, dated August 3, 1568. For a portrait of Llwyd see Plate 55.

31. THE WATER TOWER AND WALLS, CHESTER 176

This picture is given the particular place it occupies in this book not because the walls illustrated belong to the early years of the Norman Conquest, but because it was from Chester that the first great effort was made by the Normans at the subjugation of Wales. The same remark applies to the next Plate.

32. RHUDDLAN CASTLE 186

Robert of Rhuddlan was one of the first of the Normans to establish a footing in North Wales. The present castle, however, belongs to a much later period, the first steps toward its building having probably been taken by Edward I, *c.* 1277. The foundation of Flint Castle belongs to the same year.

33. THE SEPULCHRAL URN WHICH CONTAINED THE ASHES OF BRONWEN 204

This urn was discovered in a grave on the banks of the Alaw, in Anglesey, in 1813, at the place called Ynys Bronwen (Bronwen's Isle). Sir R. C. Hoare, in a communication to the *Cambro-Briton*, vol. ii, p. 71, refers to it as follows: "A farmer . . . having occasion for stones . . . and having observed a stone or two peeping through the turf of a circular elevation on a flat not far from the river [Alaw], was induced to examine it, when, after paring off the turf, he came to a considerable heap of stones, or *carnedd*, covered with earth, which he removed with some degree of caution, and got to a cist formed of coarse flags canted and covered over. On removing the lid, he found it contained an urn placed with its mouth downwards, full of ashes and half-calcined fragments of bone." The learned antiquary then calls our attention to the passage in the *Mabinogion*: "A square grave was made for Bronwen, the daughter of Llyr, on the banks of the Alaw, and there she was buried." Branwen (or Bronwen), 'the White-bosomed,'

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is a heroine of one of the best known of Welsh stories, and is famed for her charms and her woes. Davydd ap Gwilym, in addressing his inamorata Morvydd, likens her fairness to that of Bronwen. The urn is now in the British Museum.

34. PAGE FROM "YSTORYAEU SEINT GREAL" 210

The *Ystoryaeu Seint Greal* (Peniarth MS. No. 11, formerly Hengwrt MS. 49) is the earliest known Welsh Graal MS It is now in the National Library of Wales, to which it (among other MSS. and books) was presented by Sir John Williams. Lady Charlotte Guest, in her *Mabinogion*, states that this manuscript (which was then at Hengwrt) dates back to the time of Henry I. The manuscript is described in the Historical Manuscripts Commission's *Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language*, vol. i, pp. 321–322 (1899), and has been edited and printed by Canon Williams in *Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscripts*, vol. i, *Y Seint Greal*, published in 1876. The page shown is f. 26 v. *Reproduced by the courtesy of Sir John Williams, G.C.V.O., and Mr. John Ballinger, M.A.*

35. THE BUILDING OF HASTINGS CASTLE 226

From the Bayeux Tapestry. Reproduced in *Archæologia*, vol. lviii, p. 323, from *Vetusta Monumenta*, vol. vi. Mr. Round, in his article *The Castles of the Conquest*, refers to this as "the priceless witness of the Bayeux Tapestry" to show that William the Conqueror, after he landed in England, threw up as defence works mounds of the motte type.

36. CAERPHILLY CASTLE 234

From G. T. Clark's *A Description of the Castles of Kidwelly and Caerphilly*. Also described in the same writer's *Mediæval Military Architecture*, vol. i, p. 315. There he says, *inter alia*: "Caerphilly is by very much the most extensive castle in Wales, and is reputed to cover, with its outworks and earthworks, about thirty acres." An imaginative illustration drawn by H. Gastineau appears in Woodward's *History of Wales*, at p. 470.

37. KIDWELLY (CYDWELI) CASTLE 236

From G. T. Clark's *A Description of the Castles of Kidwelly and Caerphilly*. Also described by the same author in his *Mediæval Military Architecture*, vol. ii, p. 153. The castle stands from 80 to 100 feet above the river—shown to the right of the picture—on the right bank. The river-banks are here steep and rocky, a fact which does not sufficiently appear in the drawing.

38. ATTACK ON A CASTLE 238

The drawing shows the use of the *terebra* in an attack upon a castle, and the means adopted to protect the attackers

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from the arrows, Greek fire, and stones hurled or shot from the castle walls or brattices by the defenders. From *In Feudal Times*, by E. M. Tappan, Ph.D.

39. PENMON CHURCH AND PRIORY 256

Gruffydd ap Cynan on his death left to this Norman church at Penmon, among many others, money for its better upkeep. Perhaps in his day it was one of those lime-washed buildings with which, as his biographer puts it, Gwynedd was decked as is the firmament with stars. The modern church appears to be a somewhat commonplace structure. The priory is shortly described by Pennant in *Tours in Wales*, vol. iii, p. 35.

40. BASINGWERK ABBEY 262

This Cistercian abbey was founded by Ranulf of Chester in 1131. Originally a house of the Order of Savigny, it later became attached to the Order of Citeaux. If Dugdale's date be correct, it would seem to have been one of the earliest of the foreign monasteries in Wales. It was certainly founded before 1137.

41. THE GATEWAY, STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY 286

Ystrad Fflur Abbey, or, to give it its Latinized name, Strata Florida—in English 'the Vale of Flowers'—was founded in 1164 by the banks of the Fflur, on land which had been given by Robert fitz Stephen. It was increased in wealth by the Lord Rhys, as a result of which the present building was commenced on the banks of the Teifi. It is probable that at least one of the Welsh chronicles was kept by the ecclesiastics of this religious house.

42 GEOFFREY'S WINDOW, MONMOUTH 292

This window, now part of the school attached to the parish church of Monmouth, is by tradition that of the cell in which Geoffrey of Monmouth, Milton's "soothest-shepherd," whose claims to be regarded as a serious historian were finally destroyed by Polydore Vergil, composed his British history. It is described in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 6th Series, vol. ix, p. 27, where its period is said to be the fifteenth century.

43. RUINS OF THE BISHOP'S PALACE, ST. DAVID'S 298

The palace has been described as a structure of a single date and style. Its founder, Bishop Gower, held the see from 1328 to 1347. The style of the palace is therefore Decorated. It has also been said to be unsurpassed by any existing English edifice of its kind. W. Basil Jones and E. A. Freeman, in their work *The History and Antiquities of St. David's*, speak thus of it : "One can hardly conceive any structure that more completely proclaims its peculiar purpose ; it is essentially a palace and not a castle. . . . The prominent points

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are the superb rose-window of the hall, and the graceful spire of the chapel, importing an abode, not of warfare, but of hospitality and religion. Of domestic work so strictly ecclesiastical but few examples remain."

44. LLANBADARN FAWR 302

Mediaeval tradition, voiced by Giraldus Cambrensis, alleged that Llanbadarn Fawr was once a cathedral church. E. A. Freeman, however, in *Archæologia Cambrensis* (3rd Series, vol. ii, p. 224), has appropriately grouped it among the smaller cruciform churches. He refers to it as "the noble fabric of Llanbadarn-fawr, near Aberystwyth." An engraving appears in Petit's *Church Architecture*.

45. CILGERRAN CASTLE 314

This castle occupies an exceedingly strong position upon a high ridge of land jutting out into the valley of the Teifi. On one side is a deep ravine, on the other steep cliffs. According to Clark, "though it might be called technically an Edwardian castle [it] was, like others, of rather earlier date than Edward I." Of course a castle existed at Cilgerran long before the time of Edward I, for in the middle of the twelfth century it was a stronghold of the Carew family. Under John the lordship of Emlyn, and with it Cilgerran Castle, passed from the Carews, and in 1204 we find William Marshal obtaining possession of Cilgerran. Later, under Llywelyn the Great, it was granted to Maelgwn, but was regained by the Earl Marshal in 1223. Its subsequent history is not important. In 1863 a considerable portion of the breastwork fronting the river fell down, and later the building was still further ruined owing to an immense fall of masonry consequent upon quarrying operations near by. It has since been the object of a grant from the Cambrian Archæological Association. Cilgerran is not described in either G. T. Clark's *Mediæval Military Architecture* or A. Hamilton Thompson's *Military Architecture*, but has been shortly considered in *Archæologia Cambrensis* (3rd Series, vol. v, p. 340; vol. ix, p. 345). It has been the subject of a painting by Turner.

46. SEAL OF LLYWELYN THE GREAT 318

Photograph from a cast of the seal, now in the British Museum. Mr. de Gray Birch, in his *Catalogue of Seals in the British Museum*, has thus described it: "Creamy-white; fine, but very imperfect. About 3¼ in. when perfect. *Obv.* To the r. In armour: hauberk, surcoat, round helmet, broad sword in r. h. and scabbard at the waist, shield slung by a strap over the r. shoulder. Horse galloping, with saddle, breast-band, and reins. [Legend:] + SIG . . . LIE. *Rev.* A small oval counter-seal.

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With mark of the handle. 1¼ × 1 in. Impression of an antique oval intaglio gem. A boar passant to the r. under a tree. [Legend :] + SIGILLVM SERCETVM LEWLINI." It is attached to Cott., ch. xxiv, 17.

47. MONTGOMERY CASTLE 322

As in the case of many other ruins of Welsh castles, it is by no means certain what is the precise history of this building, now fallen to decay. New Montgomery was built during the reign of Henry III, but old Montgomery has a much more ancient history, having probably been founded by Baldwin in the early years of William the Conqueror's reign. Subsequently Roger de Montgomery made it his stronghold, but toward the end of the eleventh century it was taken by the Welsh. It was rebuilt by the Montgomerys, and was subsequently frequently attacked. The new castle, commenced about October 1223, was later granted to Hubert de Burgh. It was taken by Llywelyn the Great, and in the fourteenth century was in the hands of the Mortimer family. In the Civil Wars it was seized by Sir Thomas Myddleton, and withstood a siege by the Royalists, being subsequently relieved by the Parliamentarians after a bloody but decisive struggle. It was later dismantled, and to-day exists only as a complete ruin.

48. THE COFFIN OF LLYWELYN THE GREAT, LLANRWST CHURCH 326

The Church of Llanrwst (probably named after a Welsh St. Fergus or Grwst) contains many brasses and tombs, among others several brasses of the Wynn family and the tomb of Howel Coytmor. Pennant, in his *Tours in Wales* (vol. ii, p. 305), also tells us that "in this church is preserved the stone coffin of Llewelyn the Great, with the sides curiously cut into quatrefoils. That prince was interred in Conwy Abby ; but at the dissolution the coffin was removed to this place."

49. QUEEN ELEANOR'S CHAMBER, CONWAY CASTLE 344

Conway Castle, built by Edward I, was commenced in 1283, and several years were occupied in erecting it. It would seem that the window seen through the archway, which lit the chamber of Queen Eleanor, was of painted glass, such as is described in the poem *The Squire of Low Degree*, when, speaking of the King of Hungary's daughter, the poet says :

"In her oryall there she was
Closyd well with royall glas ;
Fulfylled yt was with ymagery."

50. CAERNARVON CASTLE 352

This castle was commenced a few months after Conway, and was probably designed by the same architect. It has

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been described as undoubtedly the chief of the three greatest military works executed by Edward I (G. T. Clark, *Mediæval Military Architecture*, vol. i, p. 309). No castle in Britain is more uniformly and skilfully designed, and none has survived the ravages of Time more successfully. It is built upon the banks of the Seiont, near whose waters the Romans placed their camp of Segontium. The castle gets its name from the fact that it stands on the shores of Arvon, and it is placed not far, perhaps, from the earlier Welsh camp of Caer-yn-Arvon.

51. SEAL OF EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES 358

(Earl of Chester, Count of Ponthieu and Montreuil, eldest son of King Edward I, and afterward Edward II.) Photo from a cast of the seal, now in the British Museum. Mr. de Gray Birch, in his *Catalogue of Seals in the British Museum*, thus describes it: "Plaster casts, from fine but chipped impression 3⅜ in. *Ob.* To the r. In armour: hauberk of mail, flowing surcoat, helmet with vizor closed, fan plume, sword, shield of arms slung by a strap over the r. shoulder. Horse galloping, caparisoned and plumed. Arms, England, with a label of three points of difference. [Legend:] EDWARDVS ILLVSTRIS REGIS ANGLIE FILIVS. *Rev.* Within a curved rosette of eight semicircular cusps, with a sunken trefoil in each spandril, and suspended by the strap or *guige* from an oak-tree between two slipped branches of the same, a shield of arms: England, with a label of five points. [Legend:] [ED]WARDVS PRINCEPS + WALLIE OMES CESTRIE ET PONT . . . IVI."

52. THE MOUND WHERE SYCHARTH STOOD 370

53. 'GLYNDWR'S PRISON,' CARROG 382

54. TOMB OF SIR RHYS AP THOMAS 394

In the body of the work we have been able merely to glance at Sir Rhys, one of Henry VII's strongest supporters, who after a full life at court and in the field retired to Carew Castle to spend an honourable retirement, bearing with him the signal honour of inclusion in the Most Noble Order of the Garter. An excellent sketch of this worthy from the pen of the late David Jones is to be found in *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 5th Series, vol. ix, pp. 81 *et seq.*, where the text of his will is also given. We are told that Sir Rhys was, in accordance with the directions contained in his will, buried in the chancel of the Church of the Grey Friars at Caermarthen, for he had directed that "fyve pounds lands be given to the frères of Karmerdyn for a chantry then to fynd two prests to pray for me and my wife for ever." He also made other gifts to these friars. The subject of the present illustration is the tomb which was built in the chancel. It bears the effigies of Sir Rhys and Dame Jenett, his wife, who was probably buried there with her husband.

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55. PORTRAIT OF HUMPHREY LLWYD 398

From the picture in the possession of Major-General Sir Francis Lloyd, D.S.O., by permission. "Humphry Llwyd was the son and heir of Robert Llwyd, or Lloyd, by Joan, daughter of Lewis Pigott. His father was descended from an old family called Rosendale, which removed from Lancashire in 1297 to Foxhall, near Denbigh, and acquired the name of Llwyd by an intermarriage with the Llwyds (or Lloyds) of Aston, near Oswestry" (*Dictionary of National Biography*). For further details see the Note to Plate 30. Humphrey Llwyd must be carefully distinguished from Edward Lhuyd (sometimes spelt 'Llwyd'), the natural son of Edward Llwyd of Llanvorda, near Oswestry, who lived from 1660 to 1709, and was famous as a Celtic scholar, antiquarian, and naturalist.

56. OLIVER CROMWELL'S SEAL, SHOWING FIVE WELSH QUARTERINGS 402

Photograph from a cast of the seal, now in the British Museum. Mr. de Gray Birch, in his *Catalogue of Seals in the British Museum*, has thus described it: "Red. $\frac{7}{8}$ in. Oval; a shield of arms of six quarterings: 1, Cromwell; 2, Caradoc Vreichfras; 3, Collwyn Ap-Tangno, Lord of Efionydd; 4, Iestyn Ap-Gwrgant, Prince of Glamorgan; 5, Madoc Ap-Meredith, last Prince of Powys; 6, Murfyn. Crest on helmet, wreath, and mantling, a demi-lion rampant, holding fleur-de-lis." See also Henfrey's *Numismata Cromwelliana*.

57. HARLECH CASTLE 404

Harlech is a concentric castle of the Edwardian type, and, standing as it does on a bold and rugged headland of rock which once jutted out into the sea, it must have been an extremely difficult fortress to reduce before the days of gunpowder. The south-west tower bears the name of Bronwen, the Welsh heroine already referred to in the note to Plate 33. The castle is described at length in G. T. Clark's *Mediæval Military Architecture* (vol. ii, p. 74). See also Timbs' *Abbeys, Castles, and Ancient Halls of England and Wales*, vol. ii, p. 457, where it is stated that the site was previously occupied by a British fortress called Twr Bronwen. The present castle was probably built by Edward I some time about 1286.

58. THE INVESTITURE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES AT CARNARVON CASTLE 406

It was on Thursday, July 13, 1911, that Edward, seventh of his name to bear the title, was made and created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester. For the first time an English prince addressed the Welsh people in their native tongue, and for the first time an English

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prince was formally invested with the insignia of his high office in Wales itself. The ceremony took place at Carnarvon Castle, where from the Queen's Gate tradition has it that the first English Prince of Wales, then a baby, was presented to the somewhat sulky populace. Now, more than six centuries later, the people gathered in their thousands from all parts of the Principality to show their goodwill toward the young Prince and the Throne.

By Order in Council proclaimed on February 4, 1911, it was provided that the arms of the Prince would include the arms of Wales. "Quarterly *or* and *gules*, four lions passant guardant counterchanged." The Prince's arms now consist of the Royal Arms differenced by the Prince of Wales' label, and charged in the centre with an inescutcheon of the arms of Wales (Llywelyn's), instead of the arms of Saxony. The inescutcheon is ensigned with the Prince's coronet to show that the arms are territorial, not personal. A dragon *gu.*, the ensign of Cadwaladr, is one of the badges.

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# CHAPTER I

## ORIGINS

A FEW years ago history was based on evidence purely documentary, or at least on legends, which, owing to their generality or their inherent probability, had been treated for a long time as containing true germs of history, although transmitted from man to man by word of mouth in the form of a story or a poem. To-day history, even a short and simple history having no pretension to completeness, would be regarded as imperfect if it failed to take note of those dim, remote ages, until lately called prehistoric, which are gradually, by the aid of the pickaxe of the excavator and the studies of the ethnologist, philologist, and astronomer, being brought nearer and nearer to us in living, though not, of course, in mathematical time.

Excavations which have been made in caves and river-beds and elsewhere have brought to light the remains of a race which inhabited the island of which Wales forms a part tens of thousands of years ago. For convenience and to hide our ignorance we term this race Palaeolithic man. Of him we need say nothing save that he hunted with stone implements of a rude sort, that he was a drawer of pictures, that he was a savage knowing no culture—a cave-dweller who lived on his cunning as a hunter rather than on his skill as a tiller of the soil or as a shepherd of flocks. An account of Palaeolithic man, though not impossible, is undesirable in this history, since between him and us lies the Glacial period, which, without doubt, swept away completely and for thousands of years all traces of human life from that part of the world which lies north of the Thames. No particle of Palaeolithic blood can

turn to life one thought in any man who lives in England or in Wales to-day. The same cannot be said of Neolithic man. From his entry on the stage of history the story is a continuous one. Atavism doubtless places him occasionally in our midst to-day. Competent authorities have, indeed, suggested that the modern Frenchman is nearer akin in temperament to the Neolithic than to the Gallic race. In the same way the Welshman of to-day can trace himself back to pre-Celtic times. With this race, therefore, our history must commence.

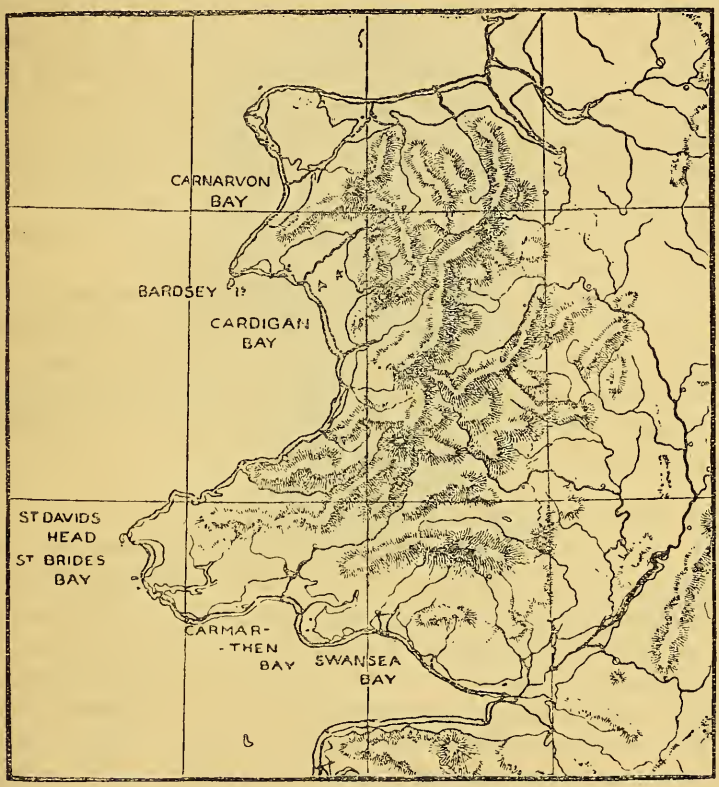
## Neolithic Man

The men of the New Stone Age came into this island some time, we know not when, after the ice had receded to the normal north. The influx is to be assigned, not to a year, but to centuries or millenniums of years. All through our account of this period it must be remembered that man was ever changing, possibly ever progressing. Tribes rose to power and fell into servitude. Races died out or merged with other races. The period which elapsed between the commencement and the end of the Neolithic period is greater than that which separates the building of the Great Pyramid from the bridging of the Menai Strait. Notwithstanding this, however, it is necessary in the present state of our knowledge to treat the period as though it extended over but a few years. We must regard the age, for the purpose of description, as one which knew not change.

From the remains which have been found in burial-places, cromlechs, barrows, caves, and elsewhere, we shall attempt later on a description of Neolithic culture. Before doing so, however, it is desirable to put shortly before the reader the various steps in the genealogy of the Welsh race from the post-Glacial period up to the commencement of the Roman invasion.

The earliest ancestors were, as we have said, Neolithic man. The earlier members of this group would seem to have been short men whose average height was not more than 5 feet

4 inches.[1] Their heads were long and narrow and the cast of face mild. Even before bronze was introduced—that is to say, before 2000 B.C.—they were conquered by a broad-headed




COAST-LINE OF WALES IN THE NEOLITHIC AGE
(*A. Sarn Badrig*)
From *Archæologia Cambrensis*, by permission of the Cambrian Archæological Association.

race who were thick-set but short in stature. These in turn were conquered, possibly shortly after the introduction of bronze, by a round-headed people of robust build, tall and

[1] The women's average height was 4 feet 10 inches. This suggests that they were the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water,' a stunted growth showing a hard life.

savage-looking. All this had happened long before the Goidels—the earlier branch of the Celtic race—had removed westward from the Continent to Britain. These Goidels, the direct ancestors of the modern Gael, first crossed the western strait in about the middle of the Bronze Age—that is to say, about 1000 B.C., or perhaps later. They in turn were followed and dispossessed of southern Britain by the Brythons, the direct ancestors of many of the inhabitants of modern Wales, shortly after the commencement of the Iron Age. The period of their coming is generally assigned to the fourth century B.C. It was this people who ruled in Britain, at least in southern Britain, when Caesar stepped on to our shores.

Having shortly described the races which honoured this island with their presence in those early times, it is desirable to retrace our steps and consider generally their nature. In the account which follows we group the first three races under one head. We thus make the tripartite division of Neolithic man, the Goidel, the Brython.

## The Pre-Goidelic Races

It is a matter of some difficulty to decide of what race the men were who inhabited Britain before the Goidel came. Sometimes the word Pict is used. This term is not, however, very satisfactory, since it means simply a painted man—as does Scotti[1]—and refers to the custom of the inhabitants of south-eastern Britain in Caesar's time, who tattooed themselves with figures of birds, beasts, and fishes. When Caesar referred to woad-painted men he was talking of Brythons, and clearly distinguished between these Brythons and the men of the hinterland, whom he described as a pastoral, nomadic people, having their wives in common, and living in a state of complete barbarity. Whether Caesar was quite just to them in this last particular we shall have to consider.

From what we have said, it will be observed that the terms Picts and Scots are unfortunate expressions. They are made more so by the fact that in later times they acquired a specialized

[1] Now doubted; possibly Scotti = 'the Ancient People.'

PLATE I. FIGURINE DE BRASSEMPOUY

*From "L'Art Celtique," by M. Rœssler de Graville (Librairie Chas. Foulard, Paris)*

meaning, referring to the men of Caledonia and Ireland. We shall therefore in the remaining part of this chapter abandon the use of these terms and refer to the Semitic [1] race.

The researches of Sir Norman Lockyer and his band of helpers into the astronomical significance of Stonehenge and the other circles of Britain, together with the independent mathematical investigation carried on by E. M. Nelson at Hestinsgarth in the Shetlands and elsewhere, taken in conjunction with the philological discovery made by Professor Morris Jones that Welsh is exactly paralleled so far as its syntax is concerned with Egyptian and Berber and the pre-Celtic languages of the Hamitic family—allied to the Semitics—have proved, we think conclusively, that from about 3600 B.C. at latest Britain was inhabited by a race connected by blood with the Babylonians or Egyptians and in close contact until at least 1300 B.C. with Egyptian culture and Egyptian priestcraft. The subject being an interesting one, and one which has only received attention within very recent years, we shall consider the matter at some length in the chapter following. For our present purposes it is desirable to add that the evidence of folk-stories, superstitions, and legends, together with the researches before mentioned, suggest that these people were a stone-using people; that they inhabited well-nigh the whole world from the Himalayas to the Orkneys, excepting Scandinavia, Germany, and Russia; that they were skilled in mathematics and astronomy and worshipped Baal and Astarté or Venus. They were non-Celtics, and were possibly a matriarchal and not a patriarchal people.

Professor Rhys has pointed out that the *Mabinogi of Math* is explicable only on the supposition that inheritance was traced through the mother and not through the father. This *Mabinogi of Math*, one of the stories from the *Red Book of Hergest*, is, so far as the manuscript is concerned, a comparatively late production, dating after the Norman Conquest, yet the story itself would seem to go back to very early times. One of the most astonishing things which modern research is

[1] We use this word in the conventional sense explained at p. xi.

revealing is the length of folk-memory. Cotton rags were being tied to trees near wells in Wales within recent years. Last century in Persia a tree was seen covered with rags close to a large monolith. The same observances have been noted in Ceylon. The practice goes back to the worship of Baal and is referred to in the Old Testament. Near Carnac comparatively recently a practice similar to one common to the builders of circles in Britain *and in America* of running naked round the circle on the 1st of May was observed. Recently small boys did the same at Stirling, in Scotland. Many other examples could be added, and the whole evidence accumulated proves, we think, almost as conclusively as is possible short of absolute demonstration that the pre-Goidelics were, in the main, a non-Celtic people of the Semitic or Hamitic race, possibly matriarchal,[1] in touch with the East, worshipping Baal, and extending over the whole of these islands even to the Shetlands. The same conclusions to a considerable extent are arrived at when we consider pre-Celtic inscriptions—what Sir John Rhys calls Pictish inscriptions.[2]

## The Life of Neolithic Man

When we seek to describe the life of the people, the difficulty which assails us springs out of the diversity of the material on which to work rather than upon absence of facts. We could take the reader on to Salisbury Plain, then the chief centre of the worship of the sun, and on the 1st of May bid him observe the thousands of men, women, and children who had gathered there as to a sacred place to pay their devotions to the summer sun. There in the dawn we might have heard music ascending to heaven from their temple to Apollo or to Baal, while priests made sacrifices to their gods that the harvests might be good. Or we could transport him to some eminence from whence to watch the building of a tomb. Across the plain we should have seen thousands of slaves

[1] The couvade survived in Ireland and Yorkshire as late as Christian times. This is neither an Aryan nor a Semitic custom.

[2] The actual cutting of these dates, of course, after the Roman invasion.

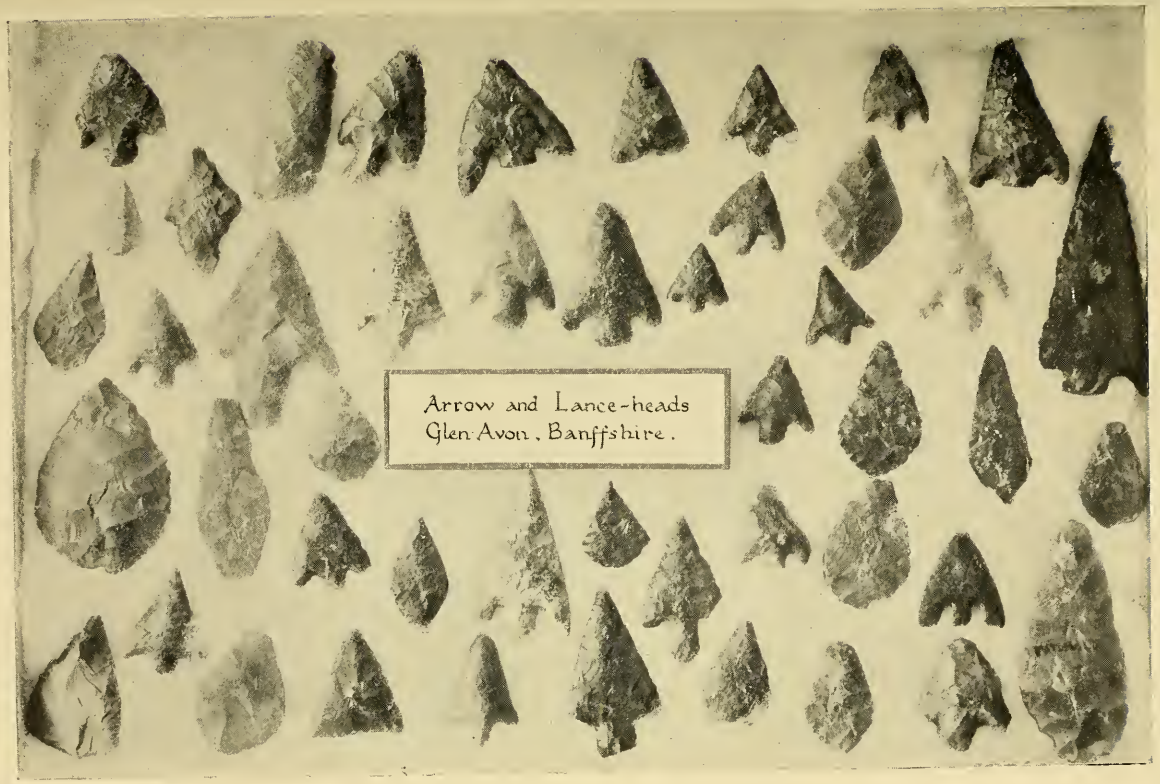



PLATE II. ARROW- AND LANCE-HEADS OF CHIPPED FLINT

toiling with ropes and logs of wood,[1] pulling or lifting the heavy stones which went to line these burial-places; meanwhile priestly architects mark out the places into which the sacred stones must be placed. Little by little the mighty edifice is raised, covered with earth, and completed. Had we been of the priestly class, we should have known how to design the entrance tunnel so that the dead, sitting in state facing the east, should at the last, when his spirit awoke, welcome the sun as it rose in the sky. We should have known that the broken weapons lying around, the food jars and domestic appliances, were there to welcome in spirit the soul of the dead. The sword must be broken or killed, so that its spirit could welcome its master. We should have known how to plant the encircling stones, the meaning of those spiral markings, those solar ships, the countless curious signs marked on the walls of these sanctuaries.

The tomb is raised. The funeral rites must now be observed. It may be that the priests headed the procession, swinging incense cups; then came the corpse and the mourners.[2] Perhaps a few favourite slaves were driven manacled to the funeral pyre on which they were to be sacrificed, so that the spirits of the under-world might be propitiated.[3] After the interment, which was doubtless marked by many sacred ceremonies, a feast was held by the surviving kin. Then at

[1] The details given are all based on definite evidence. We choose for description the most typical events and daily doings of those times. The period we are describing may be fixed approximately at 2000 B.C. That music was part of the service at Stonehenge is to some extent a matter of imagination, but our account is based on Hecataeus of Abdera, who, however, was describing the Celts in a Western island before 300 B.C. As we shall see, there is every reason to believe that their religion came to them from the more ancient inhabitants. As to the tombs, Rice Holmes has said: "The immense toil which must have been expended in constructing such [monuments] by labourers who had only deer-horn picks and stone tools proves not only density of population, effective organization, and the despotism which the chiefs must have exercised, but also a religious awe, the compelling force of which we, who live in a world that has grown old, can hardly conceive."

[2] As to this order there is practically no evidence.

[3] Whether suttee practices were common is a matter about which there is grave doubt.

last the dead, clothed in its linen shift,[1] was left alone to await the awakening. The entrance hall was not closed; a stone slab was placed at the mouth, pierced in the centre by a large hole through which the dead could see the sun, or through which its spirit could escape.[2]

Passing from these religious rites, let us go down the Brandon Flint Mines. Here again we could have seen an important and typical part of the life of Neolithic man. Descending the rope which probably led down the shaft, armed with a deer-horn pick, we could have mined the flints even as to-day they are got by the flint-workers of the district. We could have passed down workings like those of a modern coal-mine, carrying a lamp to guide us made of rough clay filled with a wick and tallow.[3] Coming again to the surface, we could have gone to the neighbouring factory of one of the most important cutlers in Britain. On the way we might have passed herdsmen following cattle on the downs, or "lithe, swarthy hunters returning from the chase," stopping perchance at some round hut to purchase a bowl of milk with a piece of venison.[4] Arriving at our destination, we could have seen some of the foremost craftsmen chipping with hammers of flint the stones, but lately gained from the neighbouring mines, into axes and chisels, hammers, reapers, arrow-heads, lance-heads, and the hundred and one objects necessary to the fighter and hunter and farmer in those times.[5]

Had we journeyed all over Britain we should have found

[1] Carbonized remains of linen which have come down to us belong to a somewhat later period.

[2] Neolithic tombs were long, long-chambered, or round. The round ones must be distinguished from the later round heaps of stone or earth which contain a few cinerary urns or perhaps a skeleton, and which belong to the Brythonic period or later. If a cinerary urn is found it generally points to an early Celtic or Bronze Age burial. The peoples of the Bronze Age practised cremation. Neolithic men did not, as a rule; they interred their dead. See further Note A.

[3] These have been picked up in some of the ancient workings.

[4] The teeth of Neolithic man point to a diet mainly composed of milk and meat.

[5] For an excellent description of the tools, implements, and ornament used in Neolithic times reference may be made to Rice Holmes's *Ancient Britain*. When he comes to describe the people and their religion we believe that he regards them as being in a more backward state than they really were.

PLATE III. FINELY WORKED STONE HAMMER-HEAD

many tribes and clans of different races. We should have witnessed many tribal wars, some on a petty, some on a large scale. We should have found a considerable population, all, or nearly all, living in small houses, in a simple manner, depending rather on the chase and on pasturage than on agriculture for their living. All these people we should have found highly superstitious and completely dominated by the priestly class, who, there is reason to believe, as we have said and as we shall see, were men of considerable learning who could write and could calculate.

### The Bronze-users

As time went on metal was introduced. How the discovery was made we do not know. All we can say is that bronze was known in Egypt 3700 years before the Christian era, and that it was probably introduced into Britain from Europe by traders, not Phoenician,[1] working along the western trade routes, some time about 2000 B.C.[2]

At first it must have been extremely precious, and doubtless did not oust the old stone implements from general use for many years. The change from stone to bronze cannot alone account for the conquest of the earlier people by the tall, round-headed men who, as we have said, came into Britain shortly after the commencement of the metal age. Bronze was still the rare possession of kings and chiefs when they came.

It must not be imagined that the new-comers exterminated the older population. As we have seen, Neolithic man lived here in considerable numbers, and has not improbably formed the main substratum of the Welsh race from ancient to modern times. As Dr. Rice Holmes has said when speaking of this invasion: "In Wiltshire and other parts of southern Britain the old population would seem to have been largely dispossessed or subdued; but the skeletons found in the barrows of Derbyshire and Staffordshire, of Yorkshire and the other Northern counties, indicate that there the immigrants mingled

[1] The Phoenician theory has long been abandoned.

[2] Different dates have been assigned. Evans fixes the Bronze Age in Britain at 1400–1200 B.C. We follow the majority.

more or less peacefully with the people whom they came among." Long after they came, flint weapons—arrow-heads, spear-heads, etc.—were in common use.

In course of time mines were opened. Ireland became even in the Bronze Age one of the most important centres of the Northern gold-mining industry.[1] Copper was mined in Cardiganshire, Anglesey, and near Llandudno; tin mixed with lead came from Cornwall, where also copper-mines were worked. With the development of metal-work the taste for personal adornment also appears to have grown. The wealth of the people seems to have increased and the lot of the women became more happy. Both the men and women of the Bronze Age liked finery. In the barrows and hut-circles of the period remains have been found of all kinds of bronze implements, including even razors; of clothing of leather, of linen, and of wool; as well as ivory, bone, and bronze pins; jet, amber, and glass ornaments; jet buttons, some being beautifully engraved, others made of stone or bone or wood, and most of them pierced in such a manner that the thread did not show through. Buttons were apparently used by men only, the women contenting themselves with pins and brooches of bronze, bone, and ivory. Some of the bronze daggers had handles exquisitely worked. One which has been found had a wooden handle beautifully inlaid in a chevron pattern with thousands of golden rivets, each smaller than the smallest pin. In one Welsh tomb were found the remains of a knight who had had his horse furnished with golden trappings. Long before that barrow was opened, yet as late as last century, a legend was current in the neighbourhood that a warrior in golden armour was to be seen riding slowly round the mound.

Besides amber and jet ornaments the women[2] wore ornaments of gold, gold brooches, gold and ivory armlets. Rings, however, and ear-rings were rare. Sometimes it is evident that sham jewellery was purchased. Just as to-day some people, delighting in pearls, being unable to purchase the real

[1] The South relied upon the Rhodesian mines.

[2] The men, of course, were equally vain.

PLATE IV. BRONZE PALSTAVE, TORC, ARMLETS, AND RINGS FOUND ON HOLLINGBURY HILL, NEAR STANMER, SUSSEX

ones, are content with imitation, so in the past vitreous paste beads were bought instead of real glass ones. In the same way, 'gold-filled' rings made of bronze gilded were worn by people whose means prevented them from buying those of solid gold. Many things have changed since then, but human nature remains the same.

One of the most extraordinary facts belonging to this time was, however, the disparity between the richness of the people's dress and the discomfort of their homes. As Dr. Rice Holmes, speaking of the Heathery Burn cave, says: "Here was a family well armed, equipped with the best tools of the time, owning flocks and herds, and rich enough to load their women with ornaments, yet content to live in a dark, damp cavern traversed by a stream, which one night rose in flood and drowned them in their sleep. . . . That they inhabited it, if not permanently,[1] at least for long periods, is proved by the abundance of pottery as well as by the heaps of refuse, which represented the remains of a long succession of meals." Though, of course, the majority of the men of the Bronze Age did not live in caves, they probably lived in rude huts, possibly, in some cases, in constructions similar in design to the tombs.

As time passed the wealth, though not of necessity the culture, of the people increased. They were still mainly pastoral. They were still divided into many clans. The old religion seems to have weakened or to have changed. The priestly class still retained, however, much of its influence. Fighting was probably frequent, and the wonderful 'forts'[2] scattered up and down the country show an advance in military skill.

## The Goidels

It was while Britain was in this stage of development that the Goidels first appear upon the scene.

A fierce war has raged for some years now as to the relation-

[1] They may, of course, have been refugees. This would account for their having their valuables around them.

[2] Of which Maiden Castle is the most famous.

ship between the Goidels and the earlier inhabitants of Britain. Sir John Rhys believes that the Goidels came west, following the general lines of the Aryan advance. Professor Kuno Meyer, on the other hand, holds a very definite opinion that the Goidels came from Ireland. He says: "Whether we take history for our guide, or native tradition, or philology, we are led to no other conclusion but this: that no Gael ever set foot on British soil save from a vessel that had put out from Ireland." We should have thought, from the nature of the authorities, that this was putting the case much too high. There are at least some grounds for believing that the Goidels came west with the general Aryan movement, conquered the aboriginals of Britain, and were subsequently driven west and north by the Brythons. It is clear that the Megalithic people inhabited Ireland, and went there from Europe. It can hardly be contended that they found there the Aryan Celts of the Goidelic race. If the Celts came later than the Megalithic people of the Neolithic age, as they almost certainly did, we can see no reason whatever why the Goidels should pass over Britain and go straight to Ireland.[1] These obvious objections Professor Kuno Meyer seeks to escape mainly, we believe, by showing that from A.D. 270 onward there were many raids from Ireland directed against the Welsh or Brythons. He points out that the eighth-century tale of *Indarba mna nDési* tells us how the Dési, an Irish tribe, having been defeated by Cormac MacAirt, left their old holdings and went in part under the leadership of Eochaid, son of Artchorp, to Dyfed (South Wales), and remained permanently there. This of course explains the presence of Gaels in South Wales. It does not prove that there were no Gaels in Britain before. It does not help us very much with the condition of affairs in 1000 B.C. Nor does the fact, if fact it be, that Ogham writing was invented in Ireland. Granted that the barrows in Britain have yielded no Goidelic skeletons, we must remember that the presupposed time of their coming here synchronizes with cremation burial. In short, all the evidence that we have

[1] It must be remembered that all sea journeys were made coastwise.

PLATE V. (1) BRONZE PAN 12
(2) THIN BRONZE VESSEL, PROBABLY USED AS A WATER-CLOCK

the Babylonian or Egyptian ancestors who had preceded them in the occupation of this land.

What is also probable is that, as Sergi said, "Indo-Germanism led to almost entire forgetfulness of the most ancient civilizations of the earth, those born in the valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris." We are by no means convinced that the culture of the Megalithic people, the race which raised the great stone monuments, was not greater than that of later races who succeeded in subduing them. Were it not that the implements and pottery, etc., found in the barrows improves as we pass from stone to bronze, we should have little difficulty in arriving at a conclusion. When we examine the stone circles and chambered barrows [1] we seem to see before us a people who were neither savages nor barbarians.

[1] See Note A for a short account of the barrows.

PLATE VI. CINERARY VASE FROM THE LATE CELTIC URN FIELD AT AYLESFORD, KENT

# CHAPTER II

## THE CIRCLES AND THE DRUIDS

SOME of the most difficult problems with which modern research has attempted to grapple circle round those strange megalithic monuments which are found all over western and southern Europe, North Africa, Asia Minor, India, the Pacific Islands as far as Japan, and South America. In particular the great stone avenues and circles have claimed the attention of antiquaries and scholars for many years. Many books [1] have been written on Stonehenge alone. Many theories have been propounded.

For us the question is of importance. Many of the Welshmen of to-day are nearer akin to the builders of the megaliths than to any other race. The monuments they raised tell us most about the culture they represented. It is therefore not merely desirable but necessary to give at least an outline of the opinions which are current to-day concerning these wonderful works of Neolithic man. Having marshalled the most important evidence which has been brought to light in connexion with these circles, and having stated the conclusions which we consider are best supported by the evidence, we shall then have to turn from the created thing to the creating man and relate such few facts concerning the priestly class of that age as may be necessary for the general understanding of the civilization which they represented.

### The Circles

In order that we may appreciate the true meaning of these monuments, it will be necessary to consider them from three

[1] More than seven hundred.

different points of view: the astronomical and mathematical, the antiquarian, and the mythological, legendary, and religious.

Within recent years a considerable amount of attention has been given to Stonehenge and other megalithic remains in Great Britain by Sir Norman Lockyer and his fellow-workers. The conclusions at which they have arrived, if correct, are of the first importance to the student of history and to the inquirer into the problems of race-development. Before we pass on to the summarization of these conclusions, it is desirable to state that other astronomers who are entitled to respect have disagreed with Sir Norman's theories. Dr. Rice Holmes asserts that Mr. Hinks has shown Sir Norman's calculations to have been founded on faulty premises, and Mr. E. J. Webb has taken a similar view. Since, as we shall see, the bulk of opinion, when looking at the subject from a quite different aspect, comes to the same conclusion as Sir Norman, we prefer to follow him rather than his opponents. If in so doing we err, we err in good company, for no less an authority than Professor Montelius has ranged himself on Sir Norman Lockyer's side.

### Astronomical Data

The researches of the authority whom we are at present considering disclose two vastly important facts: (1) the building of the avenues and circles dates from 3600 to 1300 B.C.; (2) these circles were built by men intimately acquainted with the Egyptian culture of that time. The evidence for these two conclusions cannot, of course, be more than adumbrated here. Briefly put, the outstanding points may, perhaps, be stated as follows: Egyptian temples have been found to have been built on the same general plan as avenues, circles, and cromlechs. For astronomical purposes avenues and circles are to be kept distinct. The avenue had one astronomical use, the circle had many. Each necessary line in the latter case could be marked by a stone fixed near (as a rule) to the outer circle. In the avenue the astronomical line was down the centre of the avenue; thus it could serve but one

purpose. Sir Norman has suggested that the change from avenue to circle was made necessary from considerations of economy. He has calculated the modern cost of the ancient temple of Amon-Rã (an avenue temple) at £5,000,000. Its main purpose was, of course, to bring about the apparently miraculous manifestation of the god Rã once a year at the instant of sunset.

As time went on it seems to have been perceived that a circular temple would have added advantages from the economical point of view. If this reason for the change be correct, then it would appear that we must credit the race who built the circles with the raising of those stone avenues which are found in considerable numbers here and upon the Continent.

Besides the transition from avenue to circle another change took place. In Egypt in the era of the avenue, say 4000 B.C., the year was divided, not according to the summer and winter solstices, but into two sections which would now begin in May and November. The Egyptian astronomers discovered the advantage of dividing the year at the solstices about 2000 B.C. In Britain they were directly copied. As Sir Norman Lockyer has said: "The solstitial cult in Britain followed the May year cult, just in the same way as in Egypt the solstitial cult at Thebes followed the May year cult at Memphis and Heliopolis." The change was made in Egypt, as we have said, about 2000 B.C. The date of the solstitial sarsen stone at Stonehenge has been fixed to within 200 years at 1680 B.C. We have, therefore, according to Sir Norman, the Britons modifying their most magnificent temple not improbably within a comparatively few years after the introduction of the new system into Egypt.

We must pause here, however, to point out that folk practices are known to-day which seem to indicate a division of the year into two parts commencing with May and November long after 2000 B.C. In the Coligny Calendar, to which we shall refer at greater length later on, we have a year commencing with November, according to Sir John Rhys.

Such practices as the Hoke Day ceremonies also point to the main divisions of the year falling in May and November, and these pieces of evidence date at earliest from Brythonic times, say 400 B.C.

The arguments of Sir Norman are persuasive, however, in the main. His conclusions have this advantage, that they explain several things which were previously unsolved problems. For example, W. C. Lukis pointed out that on Dartmoor and in Cornwall circles are frequently found in clusters, and the questions naturally suggested themselves, Why should these great works have been grouped together? Why should the worshippers have been gathered into separate congregations? Sir Norman has now shown us that in fact these circles, besides being temples, also had a utilitarian purpose. They were the time-givers. He has divided them into two main groups, solar circles and stellar circles, the latter being subdivided into night-time circles and morning-star circles. Such a division manifestly enables us to account for the clustering of the circles noticed by Lukis.

As to the astronomical data upon which these conclusions are based, it is, of course, impossible to deal with them in one short chapter. When we pass to the mathematical evidence we find, however, that the general conclusions already referred to are supported.

### Mathematical Evidence

Since 1912 Mr. Nelson has carried out a series of measurements of the main distances between stones, etc., found in these circles, and his researches have led to some remarkable results. This inquirer, in his extraordinarily interesting series of monographs *The Cult of the Circle-Builders*, has shown that the builders of the circles in Britain planned these monuments according to certain sacred numbers which stand for the Moon, the Sun (Baal, Bel), and Venus (Ishtar, Astarte, Astoreth). These numbers are 3, $\kappa$, and 7, or 66.6. $\kappa$ is a convenient constant which represents the ancient form of the modern $\pi$; that is to say, it expresses the relation between the diameter

PLATE VII. BAS-RELIEF RELATING TO THE TEMPLE OF SIPPAR

and the circumference of a circle. With the circle-builders, however, $\kappa$ had not the modern value given to $\pi$, but equalled $\frac{22.2}{7}$.

From measurements of the Hestinsgarth circle in the Shetlands, checked with measurements of circles at Stonehenge; Avebury; Maumbery Rings, at Dorchester; Broigar, in the Orkneys; Stanton Drew; the Mendip circles, near East Harptree; the Bodmin circles, in Cornwall; 'Denber's Pasture,' Broughton Hall, Skipton, Yorkshire; temples at Great Zimbabwe,[1] and many Greek temples; monoliths at Baalbek; the Great Pyramid; and 'Cleopatra's Needle,' it appears that these three numbers formed the basis for every kind of calculation.

The architect of Avebury had before him the measurement of the Great Pyramid base, for, in Mr. Nelson's words, "the distance of Silberry Hill from the Avebury temple in Hestinsgarth feet consists of the same numerals as the length of the side of the Great Pyramid in cubits." Both contained the same sacred number of units.

It will be remembered that in the Book of Revelation 666 is given as the number of the Beast. This is a reference to the worship of Baal, which from ancient times in Asia Minor had been contending for supremacy with the Hebrew worship of one true and living God. 'Cleopatra's Needle,' on the Thames Embankment, is 66.6 pyramid feet high. In Mr. Nelson's words, "it is stamped with the number of the Beast."

The same sacred number, with its three sacred components 3, $\kappa$, and 7, is found in every circle in Britain which has been examined. The symbolism is shown beautifully in a bas-relief relating to the temple of Sippar (see Plate 7). The same symbolism is to be found, we believe, in the Mên-an-tol, which Sir Norman Lockyer regards as a sighting-stone used by the Druids. There three notches will be observed at the top and four at the bottom. $\kappa$ does not appear on the stone, however.

To return to the bas-relief. Since we are again indebted to

[1] In Upper Rhodesia, near the ancient gold-mines.

Mr. Nelson for this piece of evidence,[1] we quote his description of the bas-relief, a description which will be seen to bring into prominence all the essential characteristics. "At the right-hand top corner of the tablet the Sun-god is seen sitting in a shrine. The three discs at the top represent the Moon, Sun, and Ishtar (Venus), in numbers 3, $\kappa$, and 7, or 66.6. The Sun-god holds a ring and a rod in his right hand: this is symbolical of his own number, $\kappa$, for the rod is the length of the circumference of the ring, and therefore equal to $\kappa d$.

"The wavy ornamentation of the Sun-god's dress will be noted. It is similar to the decoration of the plinth upon which the shrine stands. There are nine rows of these waves in the depth of the plinth at the right hand of the tablet, and seven rows at the left hand. There are thirty-one waves in the length of the plinth; this is 10 $\kappa$." Mr. Nelson believes that these waves symbolized light, and happily added the quotation from Psalm civ, 2: "Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment."

If the Sun's disc on the left is examined it will be seen that there are eight spokes in it; four of these are long-shaped isosceles triangles, the other four being bands of three rows of waves. In his third monograph Mr. Nelson has shown that a triangle symbolizes three, a quadrilateral four, a triangle superimposed upon a quadrilateral seven, and a triangle on a quadrilateral capped at the apex with a small circle $k$. M. Déchelette arrives at similar conclusions.

### Antiquarian Considerations

Now let us pass from the astronomer and the mathematician to the antiquary. Here we have a complete divergence of opinion. We will regard Dr. Evans and Professor Gowland as representing the two opposing schools for the purpose of the notes which follow. Dr. Evans, who holds the view that Stonehenge is a comparatively recent production, dating not earlier than the third century B.C. and built before the

[1] It is also noticed by M. Déchelette in his monograph *Le Culte du Soleil aux Temps préhistoriques.*

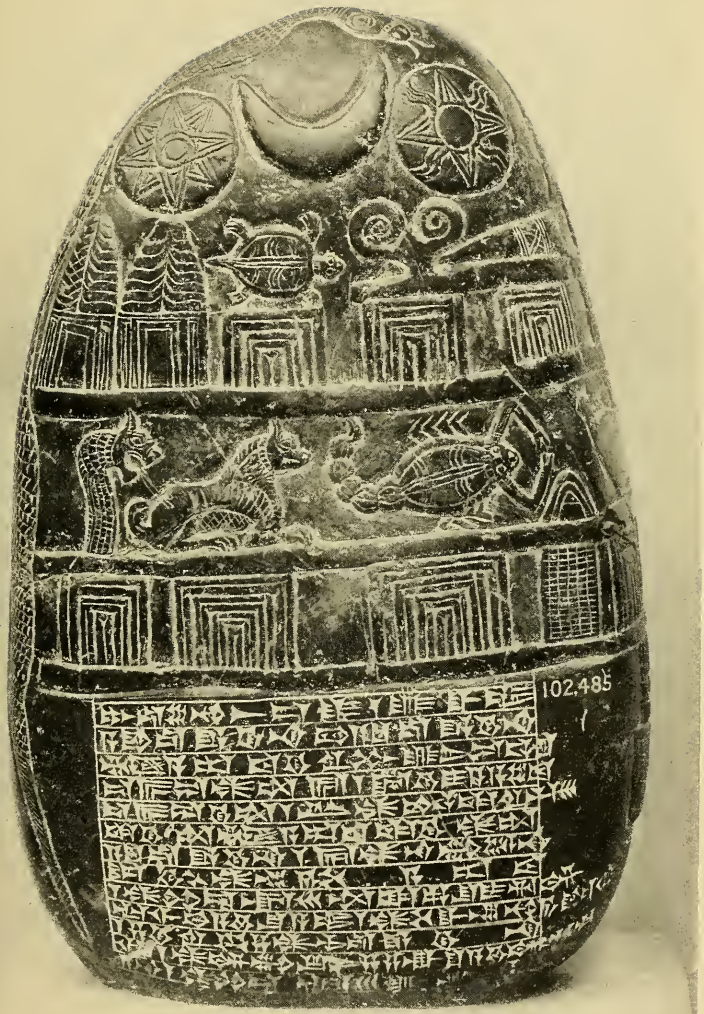



PLATE VIII. ASSYRIAN BOUNDARY STONE

close of the Wiltshire ' Round Barrow ' period, lays much stress on the fact that of the thirty-six disc-shaped barrows which have been found in the vicinity, thirty-five contained evidence of cremation interment. This, however, we believe, only proves post-Neolithic burial, and the opinion is growing that even the Goidelic bronze-users came here long before 300 B.C. Indeed, the Bronze Age, whether or not it synchronized with the Celtic irruption, dates back to about 2000 B.C. according to many eminent antiquaries.

On the other hand, Professor Gowland dates Stonehenge as belonging to about 2000–1800 B.C., thus agreeing with Lockyer and Montelius. Professor Gowland, however, believes that it may date from the Bronze Age culture, though not built with bronze tools. The fact that the sarsen stones have obviously been worked with flint implements does not show conclusively that they belong to the Neolithic period, for the only alternative was bronze, and, as Dr. Maskelyne has pointed out, bronze tools were not hard enough to work this particular kind of stone. In fixing his date Professor Gowland lays considerable stress on the finding of a deer-horn pick among the ruins, of the kind used by Neolithic man in his underground flint-mines.[1] On the other hand, Mr. F. R. Coles had said that, " so far as direct evidence has been obtained by rightly conducted excavations, the outstanding feature of all the Scottish circles that have been investigated is the presence within them of interments of the Bronze Age."

We see, therefore, that on the question of date antiquaries differ. They also hold different opinions as to the use to which the circles were put, though we believe that Dr. Evans' theory that they were primarily burial-places has lost favour. The bulk of authority supports the view that they were connected with sun-worship. On the whole we must admit, however, that the purely archaeological evidence is conflicting. Where authorities disagree it behoves the wayfarer to be

[1] Picks of the same shape (viz. with one spur only instead of the common double head) are still used in the flint-mines at Brandon, which have been in use since Neolithic times.

dumb. We therefore pass on to consider what mythology and religion can teach us.

### Mythological and Religious Considerations

As we have said, these circles were temples; they were not places of burial. The rites observed there were those of the worship of Baal, sun-worship which had come here from Asia Minor probably by way of the Pillars of Hercules. Let us see if what we know of the early religion of these islands supports this conclusion. We remind the reader at the outset that throughout these opening chapters we have regarded Neolithic man as a member of the Semitic or Hamitic race.

Now it is fairly clear that the people who raised the circles also built those great tumuli which are scattered over Europe. Such works as that at Mont Saint-Michel—which contains some 40,000 cubic yards of stone—belong essentially to the Megalithic culture. So does New Grange, in Ireland. This Neolithic burial-place possesses some qualities which give it a special interest to students of these early times. The mound itself is some 280 feet wide and 44 feet high. It is surrounded by a circle of upright stones. Tunnelling through the side of the mound is a narrow passage, the entrance of which faces exactly south-east. The passage is lined both at the sides and at the top with slabs of unhewn stone. Though but 3 feet wide, it is in places nearly 8 feet high, and penetrates into the mound nearly 62 feet. It terminates in a chamber some 20 feet high, shaped in the form of a cross. The roof of this chamber, which is dome-shaped, is formed of large flat stones. In each of the three recesses of the central chamber stands a large stone sarcophagus. No traces of burials now remain, the mausoleum having been ransacked by the Danes. At the entrance of the tunnel there stands, however, a large stone covered with a carved pattern very similar to that on chalk objects which were found in a Neolithic tomb in Yorkshire (see Plate 10). We have here, then, a splendid example of a Neolithic tomb. Its main interest for us, how-

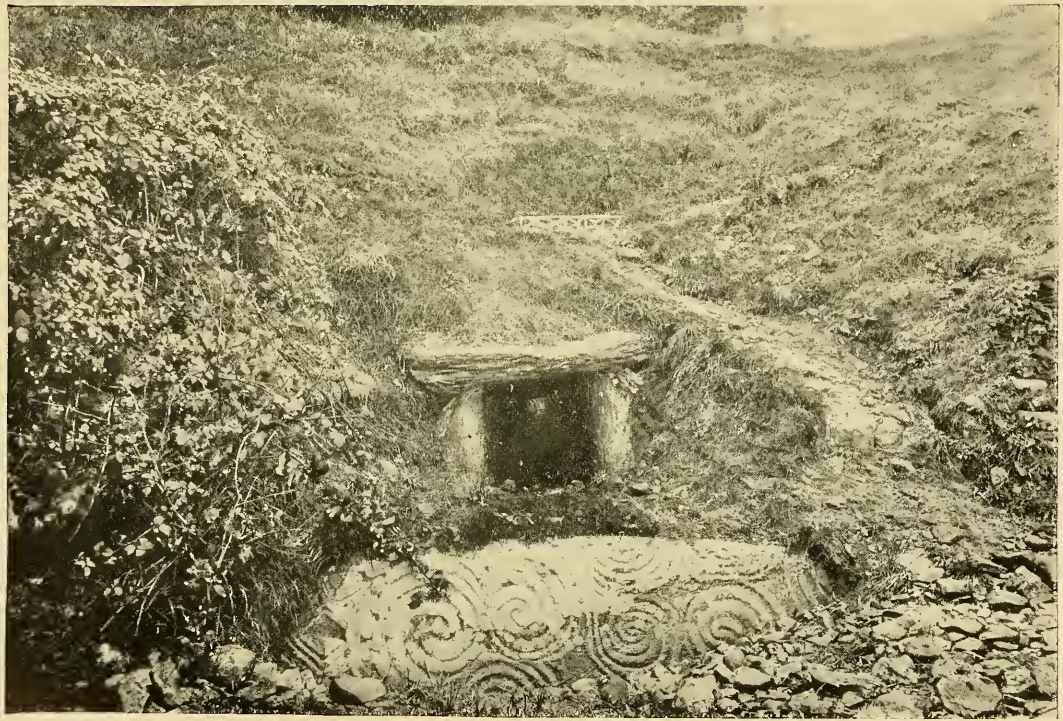


PLATE IX. ENTRANCE TO THE TUMULUS AT NEW GRANGE

*Photo R. Welch, Belfast*

ever, lies in the fact that graven on one of the interior stones is a rude representation of a solar ship.

Now these solar ships are very well known symbols representing the passage of the dead from this world to the underworld. M. Déchelette in his monograph *Le Culte du Soleil aux Temps Préhistoriques* gives a large number of examples of solar ship drawings from various parts of Europe. In some the ship and the solar mark alone are portrayed. In some the ship is drawn by a dolphin, in others by a swan. All are connected with sun-worship. In Egypt the solar ship is frequently found on monuments. Sometimes it is simply a ship with the solar mark, sometimes the ship contains the souls of the dead, sometimes inside the solar sign the god Rā sits enshrined.

We therefore see, unless our eyes have played us false, that the builders of the tumulus at New Grange observed the same religious rites connected with burials as did the Egyptians and many other peoples scattered over parts of Europe into which the Celts never penetrated. We have seen that it is at least probable that the builders of New Grange belonged to the Megalithic culture. We suggest that the British circles belong to the same culture. We are again, therefore, led back to Egypt.

If the entrance stone at New Grange and the chalk objects already referred to are examined, it will be found that on both a peculiar spiral system of ornamentation was adopted. This was not mere decoration; it has a meaning. Scattered well-nigh all over the world, at any rate over the Megalithic world, are found a series of markings which have been called cup-and-ring markings. They are found only on megaliths or on objects belonging to the Megalithic culture. They are a sign that the object on which they are engraved is holy. The curves or spirals above referred to are variants of the cup-and-ring marking.

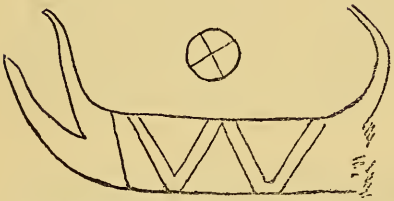
Again, nothing is more typical of the Egyptian mind of 2000 B.C. or earlier than its love of magic. Every one will remember the conflict between Aaron and the wizards

Solar Ship (with Sail?) from New Grange, Ireland

Ship Carving (with Solar Emblem?) from Scania, Sweden
(*After Du Chaillu*)

Ship (with Sail?) from Ryxö
(*After Du Chaillu*)

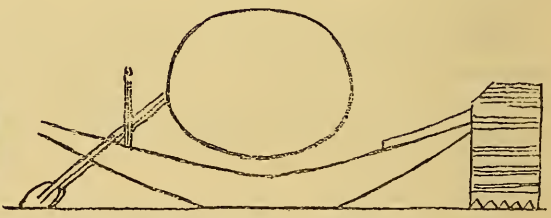
Egyptian Bark, with Figure of Rā holding an *Ankh*, enclosed in Solar Disk. XIXth Dynasty
(*British Museum*)



Solar Ship from Hallandé, Sweden
(*After Montelius*)

Egyptian Solar Bark, with God Khnému and attendant Deities
(*British Museum*)

Solar Ship from Locmariaker, Brittany
(*After Ferguson*)



Egyptian Solar Bark. XXIInd Dynasty
(*British Museum*)

From *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race*, by T. W. Rolleston.

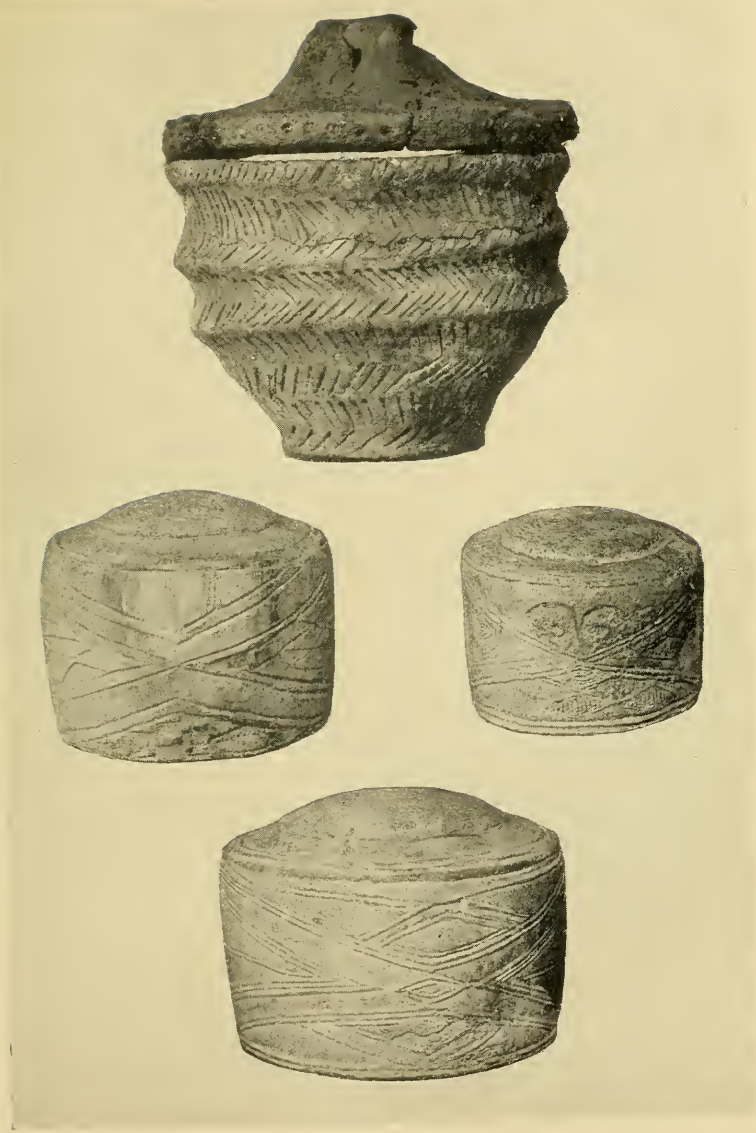


PLATE X. (1) FOOD-VESSEL AND COVER
(2) THREE CHALK OBJECTS, POSSIBLY IDOLS

of Egypt. Magic was also a peculiarity of the Megalithic culture. The Druids in after-times were wizards, and, as we shall see, were classed by Clemens Alexandrinus as one of the four great divisions of the magi. The same fact is impressed most strongly upon us by the tumulus discovered in 1864 at Mané-er-H'oeck, in Brittany. Here in a chamber in the tumulus was found a beautiful pendant in green jasper. In the centre of the chamber was a large ring of jadite, oval in shape, with a beautifully finished axe-head of jadite resting with its point on the ring. A little distance from these were several objects arranged in a line coinciding with the diagonal of the chamber, running from north-west to south-east. These objects consisted of two large pendants of jasper, an axe-head of white jade which must have come from China, and another jasper pendant. In other parts of the chamber were found over a hundred axe-heads in jade, jadite, and fibrolite. It was not a burial-place. How can we account for such a place other than by saying that it was a temple of magic ? It will of course be borne in mind that the axe-head was a symbol of godhead common in Egyptian hieroglyphics.

### Folk Practices

Again, Wood-Martin has said that " stone, water, tree, and animal worship are intimately connected." The Anglo-Saxon Christian ordinances are mainly directed against the worship of the sun, moon, fire, rivers, fountains, rocks, or trees—thus pointing to earlier practices of that nature which had to be repressed. This form of worship was common in Egypt and Asia Minor, as was the practice of tying rags on trees, which lived into modern times in Wales, and the worship of the cat, which was obviously a quasi-sacred animal in Wales in the time of Howel Dha. Again, the people who worshipped Baal practised the shedding of the blood of victims on the altar-stones. This was also a practice of the Druids.

Sacred fountains were a common symbol at Semitic sanctuaries. Sacred wells and fountains form the basis of many ancient Welsh and Irish legends, as we shall see. Evidence

from folk practices and legends of such weight could be adduced as to force one to the conclusion that the Semitic people were at once worshippers of Baal or Bel and the introducers of that religion to Britain; further, that the religion took firm root in British soil and lived on in the practices of the Druids. This is not the place in which to marshal this evidence. We content ourselves with referring to the Irish story *The Wooing of Emir*. There we are informed that at *Bron-Trogin* (the beginning of autumn) the young of every kind of animal used to be "assigned to the possession of the idol Bel." Again, in the *Book of Taliessin* we have a reference to the *cadair Belin* (chair of Bel or Bael), and the Druids believed that the Sun made his daily round in a chair. We do not pursue this line of inquiry for another reason—we have no desire to reproduce the ingenious but misguided efforts of Edward Davies, Herbert, and perhaps we should add M. O. Morgan, to read into the old Welsh stories a symbolic reference to the Druidical religion.

### Philological Evidence

In this effort to present the reader with the simple and outstanding facts which suggest a connexion between Egyptian culture and the Megalithic culture in Britain it is desirable to point out that philologists agree that Welsh syntax shows a close resemblance to that of the Hamitic languages (closely connected with the Semitic), and that ethnologists believe that Megalithic people radiated north, east, and west from some place on the North African littoral.

### Utility of the Circles

Whether, like many other ancient customs, the cult of the circle originated in utility [1] and ended in becoming a religion, or whether the unfathomable mysteries of the heavens, the beauty of the growing trees and flowing rivers, so impressed early man as to cause him to worship and study them, and so to obtain a knowledge of the heavens which in time was put to a practical use, we are not prepared to say. The trend

[1] They served, as we have seen, the useful purpose of time-keepers.

of ancient practices is frequently from utility to religion. Thus the clause in the Laws of Manu forbidding the touching of the flesh of the pig was grounded in utility, but became a religious observance. It may be that the circles originated as an astronomical mode of telling the time and as a method of fixing seed-time and harvest, and became in succeeding ages potent instruments in the hands of the priests. In our opinion, however, they were from the earliest times connected with sun-worship.

In early days great significance was always assigned to the time at which a thing happened. Those acquainted with the early history of Roman law will remember how jealously the priests (then the lawgivers) kept from the people all knowledge of the *dies fasti* and *nefasti*. It was so with the Druids, who attached the greatest importance to lucky and unlucky days and pretended to a power of divination by consulting the stars. Such practices seem to take us back to Neolithic times. Indeed, there are many reasons which support the view that Druidism goes back as far as the circle-builders—back, that is to say, beyond the Age of Bronze. In later times, after the Roman invasion, the Druids still practised some of their ancient craft in Wales and Ireland. They were still astrologers, they were still called in to calculate the way in which and the time at which a house should be built. But the class was becoming degenerate, the priest was becoming a medicine-man. With these preliminary remarks let us turn to a consideration of the Druids themselves.

## The Druids

Of the outward appearance of these priests we know but little. We are informed, however, that they wore a white robe (at least when performing the sacred ceremony of cutting the mistletoe from the oak with a golden knife), and that they were tonsured. It will be seen later on that the Cymro had to be tonsured when he entered the service or family of his chief. Whether the two practices are in any way connected we do not know.

The Druids were the priests, the men of learning, the poets and lawyers of Gaul, Britain, and Ireland. The Gaulish and British Druids believed in the immortality of the soul and in a form of transmigration of souls. The Irish Druids do not seem to have held quite the same views on this important point. They (the Irish) worshipped idols, one, the god to whom the young of animals was devoted, being called Bel.

In Gaul and Britain especially the Druids were the leaders of religion, the diviners and soothsayers.

According to Pomponius Mela, the Druids of Gaul were masters of eloquence and wisdom. They also professed to know the size and form of the earth, the movements of the heavenly bodies and the stars. This is perhaps rating them too low. They were probably acquainted with many advanced astronomical facts. There is good reason to believe that the circles and avenues we have referred to could not have been planned save by men who had a considerable knowledge of astronomy.

We are also informed by the same writer that the Druids were prophets who could foretell the wishes of the gods. Further, that they were the men of learning to whom the education of the children of the principal men of the tribes was entrusted. We have a confirmation of this in the Irish stories. There we read that King Laegaire's two daughters were sent to live at Curachan, in Connagh, in the house of the two Druids who had charge of their education ; and St. Columba himself was educated by a Druid.

It is Pliny who tells us of the reverence with which the Druids regarded the oak, and the mistletoe when growing upon oak. The Druids of Gaul held nothing more sacred than the mistletoe and the tree on which it grew, if that tree were an oak. He also tells us of the oak-groves and the use of oak-leaves in their religious ceremonies. He, too, derives their name from the Greek word for oak, a derivation which is not, however, accepted to-day.[1]

[1] It comes from the Aryan root VID, strengthened by an intensive prefix DRU, combined meaning ' very wise.'

Diodorus Siculus agrees in according to the Druids the power of prophecy. He refers to them as philosophers and priests who were held in the greatest reverence. This again agrees with the Irish authorities, for we read that at the feast which King Concobar gave, when he stood up to address his subjects he waited before speaking until the Druid Cathbad opened the discussion by inquiring, " What is this, O illustrious King? " Further, from Ossian it appears that the Druids had in times of great national danger the power of electing or appointing a dictator with supreme power, who held office so long as the Druids deemed that affairs demanded a strong hand.

The Druids doubtless derived most of their power, which would seem to have been considerable, from their faculty of divination and their knowledge, a knowledge which they were careful to keep secret. They were the wizards, the magi of pre-Roman Britain. Clemens Alexandrinus in his list of the magi of different nations mentions the prophets of the Egyptians, the Chaldees of Assyria, the Druids of the Gauls, and the philosophers of the Keltoi.

Their methods of divination have been differently described by different writers. If we follow Diodorus Siculus it appears that the Druids of Gaul practised human sacrifice, the victim being struck by a sword, and from his mode of falling, the contortions of his limbs, and the flowing of the blood future events were predicted. Strabo, however, seems to suggest that a separate class, the soothsayers, were responsible for the sacrificial rites, the Druids being rather wise men, philosophers who were concerned mainly with learning. Diodorus, indeed, also tells us that the soothsayers performed the sacrifice, but the priest attended so that the thanksgiving offered to the gods should be acceptable.

With the Irish, the Druids made their divinations from observations of the clouds, according to Dr. Joyce, though we confess the usual opinion that they used the stars for the purpose of their auguries agrees with what we know of their early astronomical professions. Cloud divination may be

a later form which would appeal to a poetic and romantic people who had forgotten the reason underlying the ancient study of the heavens while remembering that the heavens were studied. This, of course, is pure surmise.

In Ireland it also appears that the Druids practised wheel divination. Exactly how this was done is to-day unknown. It is a matter of the greatest interest to note, as Sir John Rhys has pointed out, and as Dr. Joyce has remarked, that the old Gaulish sun-god is represented with a wheel in his hand, even as is Baal in the tablet we have described.

Much of the later Irish Druidical prophecy is, in our opinion, mere medicine-man work—common cunning preying on the superstitious and not based on any particular knowledge. As we have already said, the Druids attached considerable importance to lucky days. These days were generally determined, in Ireland, from a consideration of the moon's age.[1]

Both in Ireland and in Gaul (and we believe we may add

[1] The Coligny Calendar, discovered in November 1897, near Lyons, France, proves, we believe, quite conclusively that the priests of Gaul in the first century of our era still retained the ancient belief in lucky and unlucky times. This calendar, which is described by Rhys in his paper *Celtae and Galli*, read before the British Academy in 1905, divides the year up as follows :

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cantlos | 29 days | = | May | unlucky |
| Samon | 30 ,, | = | June | lucky |
| Duman | 29 ,, | = | July | unlucky |
| Rivios | 30 ,, | = | August | lucky |
| Anacaulios | 29 ,, | = | September | unlucky |
| Ogron | 30 ,, | = | October | lucky |
| Qutios | 30 ,, | = | November | lucky |
| Granion | 29 ,, | = | December | unlucky |
| Simivis | 30 ,, | = | January | lucky |
| Equos | 30 ,, | = | February | unlucky |
| Elembin | 29 ,, | = | March | unlucky |
| Edrin | 30 ,, | = | April | lucky |

Several points arise out of this calendar even when considered generally. In the first place, observe the Goidelic 'qu' in the important November month, also in February. From this, *prima facie*, it looks like a Goidelic rather than a Brythonic calendar. Secondly, if the days are added up they will be found to make 355. The necessary corrective appears from the full calendar, which embraces more than one year. Every five years, apparently, an added month was twice put in, which brings the year on an average to 367 days. Again, it appears, according to Rhys, that this calendar gives November as the

in Britain) the Druid was connected with the bard. Diodorus Siculus treats of them together when considering Gaul, and so does Strabo. In Ireland they were quite definitely connected. The class indeed had an important third division there—the Brehon, or lawyer. In Wales the Triads group bard and Druid together. This, of course, is not conclusive, because the Triads are comparatively modern.

One of the questions relating to the Druids about which there has been most dispute is the connexion between the Druids of Gaul and those of Britain. W. F. Tamblyn has, indeed, gone so far as to suggest that there never were any Druids in the sense of learned priests in Britain. His further contention that the Roman conquest of Britain was not undertaken simply to crush the Druidical religion is probably correct, as is his view that Gaul, and not Britain or Môn, was the centre of the Druidic religion. To say that there never were any learned Druids in Britain, but mere savage medicine-men with a penchant for human slaughter and sorcery, is, we believe, to ignore the evidence of the cromlech, the circle, and the avenue.

As we have said, it is evident that in Britain in very early times there were men possessed of undoubted astronomical knowledge in touch with Egyptian culture. As Sir Norman Lockyer has told us: "The people who honoured us with their presence here in Britain some four thousand years ago had evidently, some way or other, had communicated to them a very complete Egyptian culture, and they determined their time of night just in the same way that the Egyptians did, only of course there was a great difference

beginning of the year. He adds: "Celtic folk-lore unanimously points [to the first of November] as the calends of winter and the beginning of the year." On the other hand, it will be remembered that the avenues were apparently based on a division of the year according to May and November, a division which was early altered, following the Egyptian system, to agree with the summer and winter solstices. Again, it must be borne in mind that competent authorities have fixed the date of the calendar as the middle of the first century A.D. Lastly, it is desirable to remark that the calendar, besides marks showing which were lucky and which unlucky months, contains signs which, it has been suggested on grounds which are at least persuasive, refer to weather prophecies.

between the latitude of 25° in Egypt and 50° in Cornwall. They could not observe the same stars for the same purpose. They observed the stars which served their purpose for one thousand years or so. Those stars were Capella and Arcturus." We have included the latter part of our extract because it shows that the British Druids were not simply blindly copying the Egyptian temple architecture; they modified it to meet the change of latitude. They did not copy the Egyptian stellar system; they modified it to meet their altered circumstances. All this shows knowledge vastly greater than that possessed by the totemist or the idol-worshipping medicine-man.

Then there is Stonehenge. Mute witness to a bygone culture, it stands to-day the symbol of events now nearly lost to us. Gazing upon that great circle of mighty stones, it is ridiculous to talk of savages and medicine-men. Of what matter is it, indeed, that Cicero and Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, Mela, Lucan, Pliny, Ammianus, Suidas, and others all or mainly refer to the Druids of Gaul? To argue from the negative evidence, from the fact that British Druids are ignored by the Roman and Greek writers, that therefore there were no British Druids is most unconvincing. It appears obvious that the reason why the Roman and Greek writers mentioned little of British Druidism is that (1) they knew nothing of Britain before Caesar, except such information as Pythias, Posidonius, or the Phoenician traders had gathered—and they would know little of the priestly class; (2) by Caesar's time the Druids were of comparatively small importance in the Britain he knew, and it is fairly clear that the Druidic religion was of Goidelic or pre-Celtic rather than of Brythonic origin. By the commencement of the Christian era the Druids had been driven back with their Goidelic subjects into the west and north.

But we confess that the real argument for the view that Druidism existed in Britain is found in Stonehenge and the other great stone works. If it be objected that these were built by astronomers other than the Druids, the answer is that it matters not what they are called. The important point

which emerges is the fact that there was some culture and learning in Britain long before Rome was founded.

Again, we cannot agree with the view expressed by W. F. Tamblyn that a pan-Celtic Druidism is very difficult to imagine. The fact is that we have little, and can expect little, direct evidence upon the subject. Caesar, however, states that Gaulish youths went to Britain to learn the Druidic mysteries. It is perfectly certain that in early times there was continual intercommunication between Britain and Gaul. Competent observers working on the old legends of magic wells and flooded lands, legends common in Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, and Ireland, have suggested that within a time when the creation of a legend was possible land was continuous between Gaul and Erin. This theory is not hopelessly opposed to geology. A study of Welsh history makes clear the intimate connexion in later times between Brittany and Britain. It is worthy of remark that the connexion is closest between Brittany and that part of Britain which was Brythonic. This consideration, of course, is not in favour of our present contention that Goidelic Britain and the Goidels of the Continent were in communication. We see no fundamental reason for regarding Goidelic intercommunication as any more impossible than Brythonic intercommunication after the Saxon invasion.

### Degeneration of the Druids

As the old Druidical knowledge was lost—as we believe it was lost—the Druids degenerated into mere sorcerers, medicine-men, and charm-sellers. The causes which brought about the decline are not known to us. Separation from the wider culture of the East probably marked its commencement. The wars and disorganization which were not improbably continuous for centuries before the Christian era probably also had their effect.

As time went on it appears that their wisdom became the wisdom of the wizard; the Druidess becomes a witch. In Ireland we find such practices as casting spells while on one hand and one foot with one eye closed; or of driving an

enemy to madness by throwing an accursed wisp of straw in the face of the hated one. In Wales it is manifest that the religious power of the Druids was early broken by the advent of Christianity. The old Druidical cult was not improbably at an end by the time of Severus. They lived on in name as soothsayers and learned men. Thus in the *Book of Taliessin* we read :

I travelled in the earth,
Before I was a proficient in learning.
I travelled, I made a circuit,
I slept in a hundred islands,
A hundred Caers I have dwelt in.
Ye intelligent Druids,
Declare to Arthur,
What is there more early
Than I that they sing of ?
And one is come
From considering the deluge,
And Christ crucified,
And the day of future doom,
A golden gem in a golden jewel.
I am splendid
And shall be wanton
*From the oppression of the metal-workers.*

Again, in the poem from the *Book of Taliessin* entitled " The Omen of Prydein the Great " we read :

Druids foretell what great things will happen.
From Mynau to Llydau in their hands will be.
From Dyved to Thanet they will possess,
From the light to the ground along their Abers.

Druids are mentioned in two other passages in the *Book of Taliessin*, and we have no reason to believe that they were not the spiritual chiefs of the Britons from the very earliest times.

The last line in the first passage quoted above is of interest to the student of folk-stories. Johnson in his interesting book *Folk Memory* has pointed out that the Druids and priests of the Stone Age had a prejudice against the intruding bronze—a prejudice which was shared in later times by their descendants in respect of iron. The Hebrews, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, all at one time or another shared the same

prejudice. We believe that the poet's protest against "the oppression of the metal-workers" has its roots in beliefs and opinions of immense antiquity.

### The Later Druids

Of the later Druids, the wizards and charm-sellers, we do not propose to speak at any length. Whether the word Druid can be rightly attached to them we do not know. Certain it is that in Ireland the Druids were mere wizards in the bad sense. They claimed the power of making people invisible. They also gave charms, sometimes pieces of yew (the oak was unknown in Ireland in early times), marked with Ogham inscriptions. Such charms guarded against sickness and other evils. In Wales we know that there were guardians of wells who would curse or bless for money the enemies or friends of their clients. These practices, however, have in truth no connexion with the men who raised Stonehenge—no more connexion than the charms given in the Saxon *Leechdoms* for curing the elf-sickness; no more connexion than the later beliefs that cromlech mounds were places where fairies danced. The fairy dwellings of Ireland have within recent years been the subject of some extremely interesting articles which we cannot pause to consider. In our opinion, however, these fairy stories and superstitions belong to a ruder age than either the cromlech or the avenue. The mystery to us is, "What happened to the builders of the megaliths?" That is a question which is still at large

# CHAPTER III

## THE BRYTHONIC CONQUEST

WE believe it will be of service to the reader if, before passing to a consideration of the Brythons, we summarize the results at which we have arrived in the two preceding chapters.

The period of which we are now speaking is roughly 400 B.C. Britain was then inhabited by the pre-Celtic race of the family of Semites, together with the Goidelic branch of the Aryans. The Semitics were probably the more numerous, and probably retained something of their ancient culture. Centuries of separation from the learning of the East was, however, bringing about a degradation of their civilization. The blighting influence of the Aryan wars—the nature of which we can only guess at—tended toward the same result. They still were capable, however, of exercising an intellectual ascendancy over their conquerors, the Goidels, and had impressed that race to some extent with their religion. Their priests, whom we have identified, rightly or wrongly, with the Druids, still retained some of the ancient learning, but it, too, was becoming degraded. They still kept up communication with their kinsmen of the Continent and still retained some semblance of a social system.

With the coming of the Brython, as we shall see, this more ancient people [1] was driven from the agricultural lands of the south back to the pasture-lands of the west and north. The Goidels were forced to live among forests and hills. They were driven over to Ireland and to Scotland. The centuries which

[1] The earlier races had by now commingled even as the Norman and Saxon have done—the period between the Goidelic and the Brythonic invasions being about as long as that between the Norman Conquest and the age of the Stuarts.

followed were, we believe, years of great hardship for the conquered people This, again, would bring about a further degradation in their culture. In the result, by Caesar's time they had become a pastoral people, living in a comparatively primitive manner, lower probably in the scale of civilization than the Brythons.

But even now the lamp of knowledge had not completely died out. The Druids still retained some vestiges of culture. Perhaps we can go further and credit them with the wisdom of which the ancient historians speak. If this be so, unless Caesar grossly under-estimated the degree of civilization possessed by the people of the interior, we must say that the Druids alone had saved from the wreck of Semitic civilization some remnants of its learning. The common people were barbarians.

The above account of the state of Britain before the Brythonic invasion may require correction in parts. Thus it takes no notice of the fact that some authorities put the change from long to round barrows at about 2000 B.C. and regard it as synchronizing with an irruption of a pre-Celtic, bronze-using, brachycephalic people. We have rather regarded the change from long to round as separate from the invasion of the bronze-users. There are doubtless many other points which we have stated dogmatically which are highly contentious.

Whatever may be the correct view as to the date of the invasion of the Celts, or of the change from long to round barrows, or of the introduction of bronze, one important fact at least emerges from this early time. The pre-Celtic inhabitants of Britain were not absolute barbarians. On the hypothesis that the pre-Celts in Britain were rude savages neither the Circles nor the Druids can be explained. Granted an early culture, this difficulty melts away. It is, of course, useless to pretend that Neolithic man and man of the early Bronze Age were far advanced. The contents of their tombs refutes it. They were, however, we believe, as advanced as, say, the Hittites. The food vessels which come from their barrows were crude in manufacture, but many of the shapes

show a distinctly artistic sense. If we are right in regarding the three chalk objects (see Plate 10) found in a child's tomb as belonging to this period, it is obvious that they understood how to carve and draw quite well. The workmanship of some of the Stone Age remains is quite advanced.[1] The bowman's wrist-guard now preserved in the British Museum, which can hardly date much after the introduction of metal, is most beautifully finished. The stone will be found to be studded with gilded-bronze studs. Examples could easily be added to show that although art and the manufacture of common objects had not as yet progressed very far, the people of even the Stone Age were in many ways civilized.

The early bronze-users, on the other hand, have handed down to us, as we have seen, many beautifully worked and delightfully designed objects in bronze, besides many pieces of pottery, food vessels, incense-burners, etc. The relative developments of the two races (if indeed they be separate) are, however, extremely difficult to determine from these remains. Bronze and stone are such different media to work in. Still, the introduction of bronze is clearly an advance, though quite possibly it might have been made by a people less developed in other respects than the stone-users.

### The Brythonic Invasion

With the coming of the Brython we reach firmer ground. It seems to be fairly established that the Goidels became the object of the Brythonic conquest some time about the sixth century B.C. At first the scene of action was situated on the Continent, perhaps around the plains of Northern Italy. With this we are not concerned. The actual invasion of Albion probably took place some time between the visit of Pytheas and the coming of Caesar—*i.e.* between the fourth and the first century B.C.

The invaders came, not improbably, from the Seine, the Marne, and the Rhine. Certain it is that in those neighbour-

[1] See, *e.g.*, the hammer-head shown in Plate 3, a piece of work which could not be reproduced to-day without the aid of metal tools or grinding machinery.

PLATE XI. BRONZE IMPLEMENTS, SPEAR-HEADS, ETC., FOUND AT TY MAWR

hoods extensive burial-places have been discovered similar in kind to the Brythonic barrows of Britain. They were, of course, Celts.

The most important peoples who came into Britain about this time would seem to be the Belgae and the sub-tribes of, *e.g.*, the Atrebates, the Parisii, and the Brittani. Caesar mentions a certain Diviciacos as ruling over Britain. This Diviciacos was a prince of Gaul, king of the Suessiones, a sub-tribe of the Belgae, and probably a Druid. He was, if not actually a contemporary of Caesar, not far removed from him in point of time. The Atrebates, who apparently settled in Hampshire, and whose chief town was Calleva (now Silchester), came from the Pas de Calais. Their name lingers on even yet in the form Arras. The Belgae proper would seem to have come over in considerable numbers and to have settled in the south central part of the island. The Parisii occupied the south-east of Yorkshire, and are not unconnected with the tribe who have given their name to Paris. The Brittani came, not improbably, from the valley of the Somme, and occupied what is now Kent. It is possible that they were the first of the Brythonic invaders. Another branch of the same tribe settled in north-western France; from them are descended the Bretons of to-day.

By the time of the Roman occupation it would appear that these Brythonic tribes had settled in all the south and east of what is now England and Scotland—that is to say, as far north as the Firth of Forth. Whether they had reached the west is unknown, but in Staffordshire we read of a Roman station bearing the name Pennocrucion—a word clearly Brythonic in form, since it contains the 'p' foreign to the Goidelic language.[1] On the other hand, if we go to Wales proper for our evidence, it would appear that, roughly speaking, what was in later times called Powys was probably Brythonic, at least before the end of the Roman occupation.

[1] The 'p' and 'qu' forms are now being found to occur occasionally in Goidelic and Brythonic respectively. Both 'p' and 'qu' are found in Pictish. See E. W. B. Nicholson, *Keltic Researches*.

South Wales, on the other hand, was inhabited mainly by a pre-Celtic people, the Silures. The centre of this tribe may be taken for convenience as Caerwent, in Monmouthshire, though the exact limits of their territory are unknown.[1] They were not improbably intermingled with the Goidels, and later, as we shall see, they took a prominent part, under the leadership of Caratacus, in resisting the Romans.

Their position points to a people who had been driven back by the Brythons. Bounded by the Forest of Dean and the Severn and the Bristol Channel, protected by the Black Mountains, they held a position of great natural strength, a position to which a people oppressed by a savage and warlike enemy would be likely to flee.

To the west of the Silures, in the part of Wales called in later times Dyfed, was another pre-Celtic race, called the Demetae (from whence Dyfed gets its name). They too had probably a mixture of Goidelic blood, though again we remind the reader that modern authorities have suggested that no Goidel inhabited Britain at this time. We prefer to follow Sir John Rhys. The presence of these Semites can be seen to-day in southern Wales. Dark-haired, dark-eyed, bronzed, they might be matched by men from Syria.

As to the north of Wales the position is more difficult. The inhabitants here were probably Celts of the Goidelic branch again intermingled with pre-Celtics. Môn had for a long time been the centre of the Druids. To-day more cromlechs are to be found there than in any other part of Wales of equal size. It was probably inhabited by a confederacy of tribes belonging to the older stocks. Further than that we cannot go.

In Caesar's time, of course, no part of what is now Wales was inhabited by Brythons. It was still part of Caesar's 'interior,' the refuge ground of the earlier settlers, who were slowly being pushed back by their conquerors. The Brythonic conquest of central Wales took place probably early in the Christian era. These outposts of the Brythons, the Ordovices,

[1] They probably occupied the lower part of Wales between the Severn and the Wye.

PLATE XII. BRONZE MIRROR, FOUND ABOUT 1833 AT TRELAN, ST. KEVERNE, CORNWALL.

seem to have established themselves in central Wales. But as time went on the earlier settlers, whom they had driven to the mountains of the north and south, appear to have come near to overwhelming their one-time conquerors. However this may be, we find the Ordovices some time about the beginning of the fifth century A.D. calling in the aid of a Celtic chieftain, Cunedda Wledig, who appears to have filled the post of leader of a force of cavalry and was occupied in defending the Roman wall in the north, and who was a Christian. King Cunedda responded to the appeal, sent his sons and tribesmen to aid the Ordovices, and succeeded vicariously in founding the Brythonic royal house of Gwynedd. These events, which belong to the end of the Roman occupation, we shall have occasion to refer to again. For our present purpose it is sufficient to point out that at first the Brythonic conquest was restricted to southern, eastern, and midland England; later it spread to central Wales, still later to Eryri and the mountains of the north.

But although the Brythonic Celt at first inhabited England rather than Wales, it is necessary to bear in mind that when the protection of Rome was removed and the barbarian hordes from Scandinavia and Germany bore down on the Brythons the one-time conquerors were in turn driven from the fertile plains of England to the mountains of the west and north. We can still hear the cry of the vanquished Celt, preserved to us by the Brython Gildas. As the late Dr. Hodgkin tells us: "In 446 the poor remnants of the Britons send their celebrated letter to that Roman general whose name was at the time most famous among men: the letter which began, 'To Aetius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons,' and went on to say, 'The barbarians drive us to the sea: the sea drives us back on the barbarians: we have but a choice between two modes of dying, either to have our throats cut or to be drowned.'" As all the world knows, Aetius did not respond. He was too busy fighting against the Huns to spare men for the defence of Britain. The result was, we believe, that England was swept well-nigh from shore to shore by the

barbarians. Save in a subject state, the earlier inhabitants lived no longer there. They still, however, continued to be free in the west and north, particularly in Cornwall, Wales, and Cumberland. It is therefore the people of those districts who are directly descended from the Celtic races, and especially from the Brythons.

Since, then, the Welsh of to-day are directly descended from the Brythons (and more remotely from the Semites and Goidels), since they are, in fact, the true Britons, some account of this race seems desirable.

### Description of the Brythons

The Brythons, like the Gauls, were men of much physical beauty. Tall,[1] clean-shaven, save for long moustaches, with clear red and white complexions and hair of yellow or golden brown, which they sometimes attempted to improve with dye, dressed in the characteristic Gallic breeches, with a bright-coloured sleeved tunic and a woollen cloak, frequently of red or crimson, sometimes intricately decorated with a chequered pattern, and fastened at the throat with bronze or gold brooches of most beautiful design, with torques of gold about their necks and golden bracelets on their arms, the British warriors appeared indeed to belong to a noble race.

### Brythonic or Late Celtic Art

Their arms were no whit less handsome than their persons. Daggers, swords, shields, helmets, the many articles of offence and defence which were to be found in the soldier's armoury in that age, were all designed to give an impression of stately beauty. We know of no form of art which gives such a feeling of strength as does that of the Late Celtic period. No weak or mean line will ever be found on a piece of Late Celtic work. Nor were they only artists; they were also craftsmen. As Mr. J. Romilly Allen says: "The Celts had already become expert workers in metal before the close of the Bronze Age;

[1] Strabo tells us that British youths were six inches taller than the tallest man in Rome.

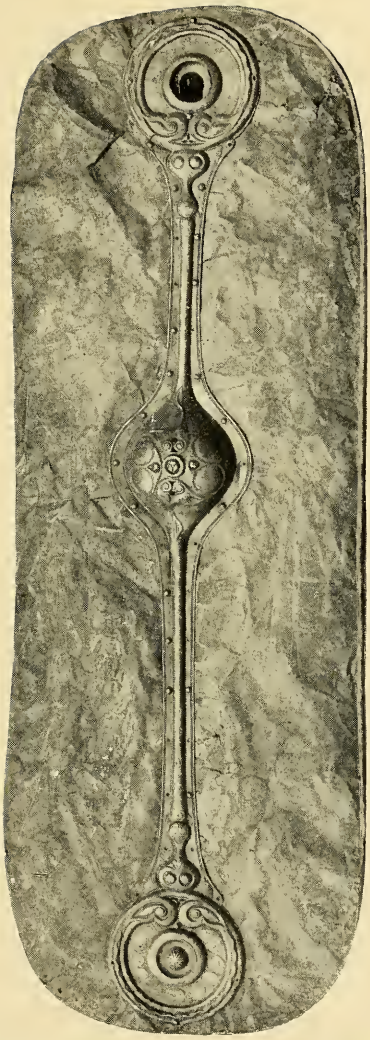


PLATE XIII. BRONZE AND ENAMEL SHIELD OF LATE CELTIC WORK

they could make beautiful hollow castings for the chafes of their sword-sheaths; they could beat out bronze into thin plates and rivet them together sufficiently well to form water-tight cauldrons; they could ornament their circular bronze shields and golden diadems with repoussé patterns, consisting of corrugations and rows of raised bosses; and they were not unacquainted with the art of engraving on metals." He adds: "The Celt of the Early Iron Age attained to a still higher proficiency in metallurgy than his predecessor of the Bronze Age."

By about the first century B.C. Late Celtic art had probably reached its height. Even at this time the art of enamelling was probably extensively practised in Britain.[1] Some of the specimens which have been found show a most cultured artistic sense. Perhaps one of the best examples of Late Celtic work is the shield which was dredged out of the Thames near Battersea. Of this Allen says: "[It] is about the most beautiful surviving piece of Late Celtic metal-work. . . . No written description can give any idea of the subtle decorative effect produced by the play of light on the flamboyant curves as they alternatively expand and contract in width and rise and fall above the surrounding level background. The drawing of the curves is simply exquisite, and their beauty is greatly enhanced by the sharp line used in all cases to emphasize the highest part of the ridge."

It is, of course, impossible in a general history to deal more than in the barest outline with the art treasures of any age. We must add, however, that the Brythons have left us many examples of objects of art unconnected with either warfare or personal adornment. Thus bronze mirrors have been found; also a few pieces of decorative wood-work, one of which, a tub of ash, had its surface covered with flowing and graceful curves carved into the wood. We have also remains of bronze

[1] Philostratus, a Greek sophist at the court of Julia Domna, wife of the Emperor Severus, writing at the beginning of the third century A.D., tells us that "they say that the barbarians who live in the ocean pour these colours on to heated brass, and that they adhere, become hard as stone, and preserve the designs that are made upon them." He was about three hundred years behind the times

spoons and other domestic utensils. Spinning and weaving must have been extensively practised. From almost every inhabited site of the period quantities of long-handled weaving-combs, spindle-wheels, and loom-weights have been recovered. Antiquaries have also found many objects connected with horsemanship. It will be remembered that Caesar was astonished and surprised at the wonderful horsemanship of the Britons, and the Gauls for centuries supplied Rome with some of her best cavalry. It is therefore not a matter for surprise that many articles relating to horsemanship have been preserved. Bridles, horse-trappings, and chariot-wheels have been found, and of the first-named hundreds, if not thousands, of examples are known.

It is to this period that we must date the introduction of the potter's wheel into Britain. It is upon Late Celtic pottery that the circular rings which show that it was turned are first found. These earthenware vessels naturally gain in symmetry from the change. The general lines on which they are designed are not, however, very obviously altered. Perhaps it is to this period also that we should ascribe the introduction of the water-clock.[1] This new means of telling the time consisted of a large bowl with a tiny hole in the bottom. The bowl was placed on water and the time it took to fill was observed. That gave a constant by which it was possible to divide up the day and night. The water-clock was, so to speak, the inverse of the hour-glass.

The Brythons possessed boats and ladders, and appear to have had a considerable knowledge of the working of wood as well as metal. Commerce was not unknown. They used coins,[2] sometimes of gold, which were modelled on those of Philip II of Macedon.

### Domestic Arrangements of the Brythons

It was perhaps in the arrangement and equipment of their homes that the Brythons appeared most barbarous. Like

[1] It is possible that it dates from the Bronze Age.

[2] For an account of these coins see Note B, p. 415.

PLATE XIV. THE AYLESFORD PAIL 44

*A good example of Late Celtic work*

the Goidelic dwelling-places, the huts of the later Celts assorted ill with the magnificence of their occupants. These huts would seem to have been, in general, circular in shape, with clay floors, having a fireplace in the centre. The walls were of timber filled in with wattle and daub. Each hut was entered by a door, to which there was a doorstep. The occupants slept upon straw beds covered with the skins of animals or with blankets of wool. The huts were built in groups, similar to the hamlet. In many ways these domestic arrangements resembled those of the later homes and hamlets of the Welsh.

The Brythons would appear to have been an agricultural rather than a pastoral people. They reaped their grain with iron reaping-hooks, and probably ploughed with oxen and not with horses. They possessed, of domestic animals, besides the horse and the ox, sheep, swine, goats, dogs, and fowls.

### Nature of the Brythons

Without entering into further details, we believe, from what we have already said, that it will be seen that the Brythonic warrior who conquered this island, or rather the major portion of it, some time about 400 B.C. was, even before the coming of the Romans, by no means a savage, hardly a barbarian. To the cultured minds of Rome—Rome, which had emerged from its own Bronze Age only a few centuries before—the Gaul and the Brython appeared as rude warriors fit for little but fighting. They observed that, though brave and warlike, the Celts were disputatious, easily provoked, generous, unsuspicious but swayed by passion rather than by reason, and easily vanquished by stratagem. As M. Porcius Cato said, "There are two things to which the Gauls are devoted—the art of war and subtlety of speech." We are also told that they were very eager for news.[1] They were, we believe, completely dominated by their priests, the Druids, and

[1] Mr. T. W. Rolleston in his *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race* happily quotes from Edmund Spenser the passage: "The Irish use commonlye to send up and down to know newes, and yf any meet with another, his second woorde is, What newes?" The same peculiarity was noticed by the ancient travellers in Gaul.

were extremely superstitious. It is perhaps desirable to warn the reader against relying too much on the Greek and Roman

THE GRAVE PIT, AYLESFORD
From *Archæologia*, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

historians when they write of the Britain of pre-Roman times. Did not Procopius, writing in the sixth century A.D., describe what we now call Scotland as a place where no man could live for half an hour on account of the unwholesomeness of the

PLATE XV. A BILINGUAL INSCRIPTION FOUND AT NEVERN, PEMBROKESHIRE 46

*Photograph of a rubbing*

*From "Archæologia Cambrensis," 6th Series, vol. xiii, by permission*

air, and because it was infested with vipers and all kinds of noxious beasts? Caesar's knowledge of the interior of Britain was admittedly small, and the other writers who touch on Britain (apart from the Roman occupation) are in like case. We therefore prefer to follow the evidence of the burial-places. From these we gather that the Brythons had art; they had commerce. Their domestic arrangements were rude, perhaps, but not to the extent of being barbarous. They practised agriculture on an extensive scale. They had, we believe, if not a literature, at least a large number of legendary poems and stories. We shall have to consider in a subsequent chapter the connexion between that mass of romance which, centring round the name of Arthur, spread over well-nigh the whole of Europe, and the Brythonic tales which have been preserved to us to-day by such mediaeval works as the *Red Book of Hergest*, the *Black Book of Carmarthen*, and the *Brut Geoffrey ap Arthur* (Geoffrey of Monmouth), and have been familiarized to the general reader by the delightful translation of certain of those works by Lady Charlotte Guest in her *Mabinogion*. For the present it is sufficient to say that modern authority has almost decided that the Arthur stories are, in their origin at least, as old as the Late Celtic art, if not older. Taking all these facts together, we must acquit them of complete barbarity in spite of their predilection for woad when preparing for battle!

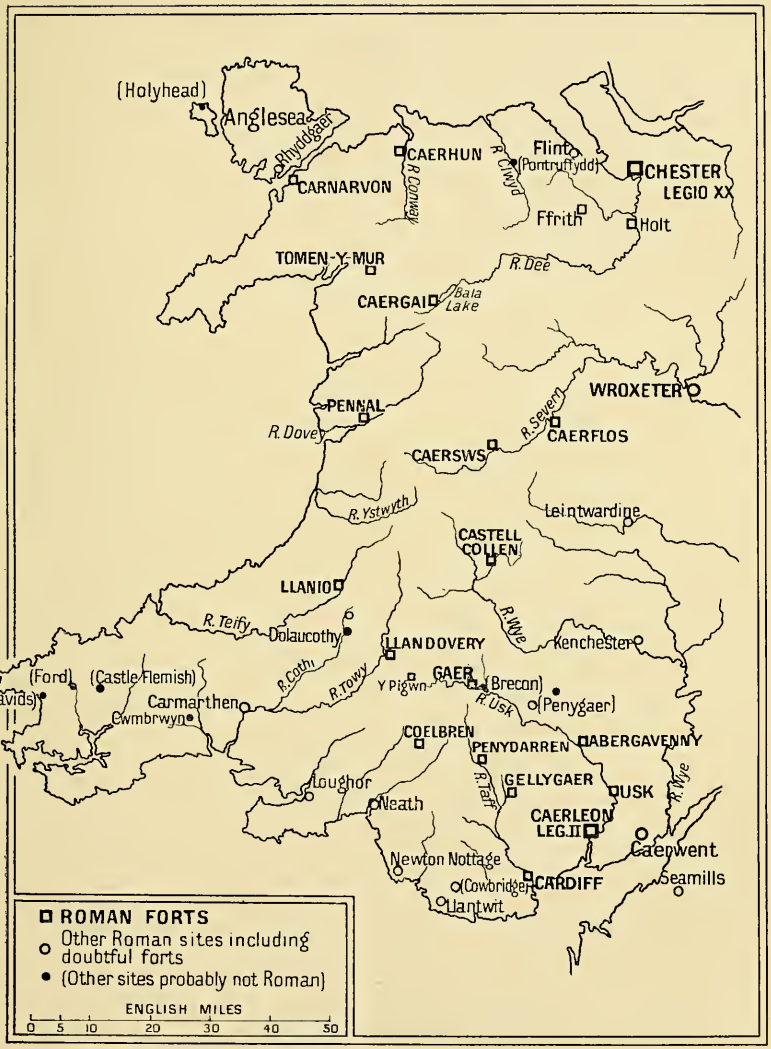
# CHAPTER IV

## THE ROMAN OCCUPATION

NO man can say to-day how much the world is indebted to the genius of Rome. We are told that East is East and West is West, ages apart in point of development, temperamentally different on almost every point. Rome *is* the West. Her civilization, built up by men of matchless prudence and practical insight, has swayed the Western world at least since Caesar's time. Her laws, the foundation-stones of all her civil greatness, the true creators of a very living liberty, are to-day in operation in almost every European State.[1] Her very wars brought blessings to the conquered as well as to the conquerors.

When Caesar stepped on to the sands of Albion he saw a race of men brave and warlike, men who had some knowledge of the arts and commerce and whose native vigour was in the years to come to join with the more stolid Teuton in the forming of a race destined for world-empire; capable of a more marvellous gift for government than even Rome herself. Mighty fighters and great statesmen were to spring from the junction of Celt and Saxon, but as yet, in Caesar's time, the Celt of Britain was not far advanced in point of development from those brave warriors who, well-nigh four centuries before, had in their turn borne down on Rome, leaving it a broken and a ravaged city. When the usurper Constantine left these shores in 407 and the Roman occupation was ended, the legions left behind them a highly civilized and organized community, acquainted with Roman government,

[1] Including, in our opinion, England, though there are many who claim for English law an indigenous growth.




MAP OF ROMAN WALES 48

laws, literature, art, and architecture. Was it not a native, a Briton, who, in the panic which gripped Romanized Gaul when the Vandals swept down on southern Europe, dividing Gaul and Spain and the north from the protection of Rome, now, alas! tottering to her final overthrow, was chosen head of the government in England and invested with the imperial purple, crowned with a diadem and surrounded by a body-guard? Though Gratian, as this Briton was called, was murdered within four months, his elevation shows that we are now no longer dealing with an uncivilized or unenlightened people. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that Rome gave the Western world Government, even as Greece gave it Art.

### Caesar's Expeditions

Of Caesar's abortive attempt at conquest, commencing with the mission of Commius, the embarkation from Cape Gris-nez on August 26, 55 B.C., of the Seventh and Tenth Legions under Caesar, the gallantry of the standard-bearer of the Tenth Legion, who forced his comrades to follow him in the attack on the barbarians lest the eagle should fall into the hands of the enemy; of the attack by the Brythons, mounted on horseback or in chariots; of their eventual defeat and orderly retreat; of the destruction of a large part of the Roman ships by an unusually high tide; of the subsequent guerrilla warfare and ambuscades, we cannot treat. The expedition was a failure and Caesar returned to Gaul. Next year a larger force set sail on July 23 from the Portus Itius. Again the ships were broken by a storm, again, after some excursions against Cassivellaunus, Caesar retired to Gaul. He never returned to the attack. Anxious times were ahead—the massacre by the Eburones, the revolt of Vercingetorix, the sieges of Gergovia and Alesia. It was reserved to Aulus Plautius, a senator in the reign of Claudius, to lead the successful expedition in A.D. 43.

As to the ninety-seven years which separate these expeditions, nothing is known of the Britons save such meagre

details as may be gathered from their coins.[1] We know at least the names of King Commius (perhaps the same person who acted as ambassador to Caesar and, later, joined in the revolt of Vercingetorix, subsequently submitting to Mark Antony on the terms that he should be allowed to dwell in a place where he would never be offended by the sight of a Roman) and his sons Tincommius, Verica, and Eppilus. Dubnovellaunus, whose name appears as a king of Britain on the walls of a porch in a temple in the Turkish town of Angora, also struck a number of coins. These kings probably reigned south of the Thames. On the north side we have coins of Tasciovanus, whose capital was at St. Albans, and his son Cunobelinus, the Cymbeline of Shakespeare's play and the Kymbelinus of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Their date is about the commencement of the Christian era. It was against Cunobelinus or his sons, Caratacus or Caractacus or Caradoc[2] and Togodumnus, that Aulus Plautius mainly fought. They were the chiefs of the Catuvellauni, and their power was considerable until the Romans broke it, chiefly by the capture of Camulodunum, their capital. Cunobelinus was now dead; Caratacus escaped to Demetia and raised up the Silures, who dwelt there, to make a final effort to retain their liberty. By A.D. 47 most of Britain south of the Thames had been brought within the Empire. In that year Aulus Plautius left this island, being succeeded by Ostorius Scapula. Almost the first act of the new legate was to push rapidly over the central plains to Cheshire, where he established at modern Chester the famous military base whence the Twentieth Legion was to attempt the conquest of western and northern Britain.

The success which had met the Roman arms had been, so far, very considerable. The fields of what is now southern and central England, or Lloegria, were in their hands. Ostorius was to find, however, that the mountains of Wales enabled their holders to offer a very different resistance. For him no

[1] See Note B, p. 415.

[2] The better Welsh spelling of Caradoc is Caradog, pronounced not unlike 'Craddock.'

ovation was prepared such as had fallen to the lot of Plautius. He was destined to die a few years hence, worn out with the fatigues of constant warfare, a disappointed if not a broken man.

At the moment, however, Fortune continued to turn her sightless eyes toward Rome. From Chester the legionaries pushed on quickly into the territory of the Deceangi, who occupied the district called in later times Tegeingl, the modern Flintshire. There the valuable lead-mines were opened and worked. Perhaps even as early as this the fort at Caerhun was founded, and the beginning made in the building of that series of minor forts and blockhouses which, as we shall see, was eventually adopted as the only way in which to bring these brave mountain folk to subjection.

## Caratacus

From the north Ostorius passed to southern Wales and attacked the Silures under Caratacus. These Silures, a Goidelic or perhaps pre-Celtic people, would appear to have made a lengthy stand against the Roman arms. The campaign not improbably lasted for some years, and we can quite believe that Caratacus won many battles, though in truth the Roman historian slurs over this, to him, unpleasant part of the story. The end of his leadership came with what we will call the battle of Mount Caradoc, though indeed the exact locality is disputed. This hill overlooks the pretty little town of Church Stretton, on the Welsh border.[1]

Caratacus exerted himself to the utmost and spurred on his followers to a desperate resistance. Entrenched behind a roughly made wall, these poor barbarian patriots who fought the Empire for their freedom were for a time successful, but at last their defence was pierced and the well trained, equipped, and armoured legionaries overwhelmed the irregular and ill-armed ranks of the defenders. The victory was complete,

[1] Many opinions have been held as to the exact locality of the battle. It is quite uncertain where it was fought. Several authorites favour the Leintwardine site.

though Caratacus himself escaped for the time being. His army was shattered, his wife, his daughter, and his kinsfolk fell into the hands of the conqueror. He himself was shortly afterward treacherously surrendered by the queen of the Brigantes, a tribe located in Yorkshire, loaded with chains. The Romans took him, his wife, child, and brethren, captive to Rome, where they did him the honour of declaring a public holiday so that the citizens might witness the submission of this brave defender of his country. He bore himself like a man and was pardoned by Claudius. We do not read of his return to Britain. The splendours of Rome seem to have captivated him.

The defeat of Caratacus by no means resulted in the immediate break-up of the resistance of the Silures. They continued for years to be a thorn in the side of the Roman legate, and eventually it was found necessary to establish another great legionary fortress at Caerleon-upon-Usk, the Isca Silurum of Tacitus. This great centre of Roman arms was now occupied by Legio II Augusta, and from this stronghold a whole chain of forts and blockhouses was built with the purpose of subduing central and southern Wales.

### Boadicea

It would be out of place in a history of Wales to consider in any detail the history of the Roman wars which followed, under the leadership first of Didius Gallus and Veranius, and later of Suetonius (appointed legate A.D. 59). We must, however, mention the terrible massacre of the Roman colony at Camulodunum (Colchester), and of the Ninth Legion, which was surprised while marching to its rescue. This was the work of Boadicea,[1] queen of the Iceni, a Brythonic tribe, which had been roused to madness by the usurious exactions of that money-lending philosopher Seneca (who had lent some 10,000,000 sesterces at ruinous rates to these people, and later suddenly called in his loans) and by the ill-treatment of the widow and the violation of the daughters of

[1] More correctly Boudicca.

King Prasutagus, late king of the tribe. His widow was this Boadicea, who is described by the Greek historian Dion as a woman tall of stature, hard-faced and fierce-eyed, with long yellow hair reaching down to her girdle.

At the time this massacre occurred Suetonius was attempting the conquest of the Druids of Anglesey. The Roman leader had succeeded in clearing away part of the sacred groves which for so long had been the silent witnesses of the human sacrifices which were part of the rites of the priests of Druidism, but before Anglesey was completely conquered the terrible news of Camulodunum arrived. Suetonius hastily gathered his forces, and by forced marches reached Londinium, which now for the first time appears on the pages of history. His army consisted of the Fourteenth and part of the Twentieth Legion. In the meantime Verulam (St. Albans) had been put to the sword by Boadicea. Suetonius, to his dismay, learnt that the commander of the Second Legion had remained at his station at Caerleon-upon-Usk, although he had been appealed to for aid. He therefore found it necessary to abandon London in order to effect the junction of his forces with the remainder of the Ninth Legion, which had managed to reach Lincoln, and such part of the Twentieth as he had left at Chester. Boadicea sought to prevent this, and constantly harried the Roman general in his northward march. At last the Romans decided on battle. The result was an overwhelming victory for the legionaries, who are said to have slaughtered some 80,000 of the Britons for a loss of some 800 on their own side. Boadicea herself died either by poison self-administered or by disease. Almost simultaneously the leader of the Second Legion ended his life with his sword. The result of the insurrection was that Rome decided on a more pacific policy, and Suetonius was recalled in A.D. 61.

Following Suetonius came Julius Frontinus He pushed on into Wales, having beforehand completed the conquest of the south. Wales too he reduced to a temporary obedience, and between the years 74–78 he finally subdued the Silures. The

Ordovices of North Wales were still, however, untamed. Affairs were in this state when Agricola was appointed legate in A.D. 78.

### Agricola

Almost on his arrival, though it was now autumn, he decided on a disciplinary campaign against the Ordovices of north central Wales, who had lately destroyed a squadron of Roman cavalry. Agricola marched against them with an army of legionaries and allies. The Ordovices wisely retired to the hills of Denbighshire. Agricola followed and defeated them, and, pushing onward, reached the Menai Strait. This narrow stretch of water offered an obstacle to further advance, for the Romans had no ships. Nothing daunted, Agricola sent over swimmers. Surprised, and remembering the havoc which Suetonius had wrought among them, the islanders refrained from giving battle and submitted.

Agricola now set himself the statesmanlike task of proving to the barbarians that they lost little by being conquered by Rome. He cleansed the administration, fostered art and architecture, encouraged building, and had the more important natives educated in the liberal sciences and (perhaps to their great harm and final undoing) taught them the meaning of luxury. Not improbably he also introduced Roman law and the principles of Roman commerce. We believe that the Roman system of marketing, with market law and a market judge, was introduced in early times into Britain and lived on in full force into Anglo-Saxon days, the curule aediles of the Romans being represented later by the 'portgerefa' of the dooms of Aethelstan. It may be that it came in under the wise government of Agricola. We think it is evident that the laws of Howel Dha ('the Good'), the great Welsh code of the tenth century, contained many rules based on Roman law. Whether this was due to the fact that the Welsh traced themselves from the Brythons, who had for centuries lived under Roman rule and probably Roman law, or whether the Welsh lawyers who compiled these laws had before them the

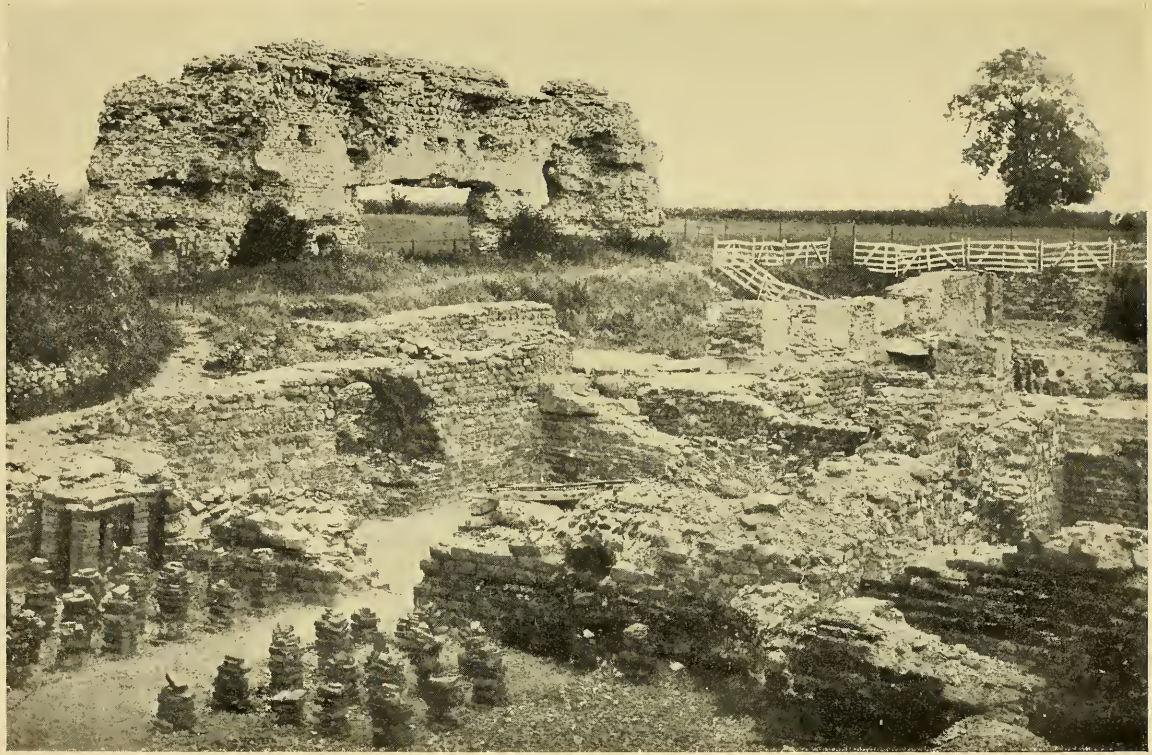


PLATE XVI. GENERAL VIEW OF THE EXCAVATIONS ROUND THE BASILICA OF VIROCONIUM

*Photo Mansell & Co.*

Continental codes, which in their turn borrowed much from Rome, we are not prepared to say.

Agricola, while thus engaged in the higher arts of conquest, was not permitted to pursue a purely pacificist policy. There were, in the years that followed, numerous excursions, battles, and victories. With these we are not concerned. Agricola evidently pursued the military plan of reducing the country to subjection or impotence by a well linked up system of fortified camps.

It is these very forts and camps, together with the civilian towns which grew up around them, that tell us most about the three hundred and twenty-three years which separate the recall of Agricola from the final departure of the legions from Britain. As Professor Haverfield has said, "The spade is mightier than the pen," and although he has accused Welsh antiquaries of failing to scratch the soil in search of knowledge, he has well-nigh remedied the neglect, and has given us an adequate account of the Roman military occupation of this land of mountains.

## Pacification of Wales

It is probable that we can date the building of most of these forts to the last quarter of the first century A.D. The military result was the pacification of Wales. Professor Haverfield has told us that "From the autumn of 78 onwards we hear no more of Welshmen armed against Rome. The tribes of north Britain rose, not once only, but once every twenty years, till near the end of the second century. The tribes of Wales did not move. Forty or fifty years later Roman authority was so strong that garrisons could be reduced and troops could be withdrawn from some of the fortified camps which guarded the country."

Let us now see what brought about this change of affairs. The starting-points were the legionary fortresses of Chester (Twentieth Legion) and Caerleon (Second Legion), some twelve miles to the north-east of Cardiff. Beginning with these as centres, forts were planted in North Wales at Caerhun,

Caernarvon, Tomen-y-Mur, Caergai, Pennal, Caersws, Caerflos, Wroxeter, and Hope. It is also believed that there was a small blockhouse built in Anglesey, and many small forts other than those mentioned above were doubtless scattered over North Wales. In the south, starting with Caerleon as centre, we have remains of forts at Caerwent, Cardiff, Aber, Caermarthen, Cwmbrwyn, Coelbren, midway between Caerleon and Caermarthen, Penydarren, a little farther to the east, Gellygaer, midway between Penydarren and Caerleon. Still farther east, making an apex to the equilateral triangle having the line between Caerleon and Caerwent as base, was Usk. Farther north was Abergavenny, while nearly forty miles to the north-east the fort at Llandovery, with the famous camp of Gaer linking them up, was placed. Connecting this post with the forts of the north were Castell Collen to the north-east and Llanio to the north-west.

To mention all the smaller blockhouses which excavations and research have discovered would be to burden the text unduly with place-names.[1] It is, however, desirable to enter upon a short description of these forts, the roads joining them, and the objects of interest which have been found in them.

## Roman Forts

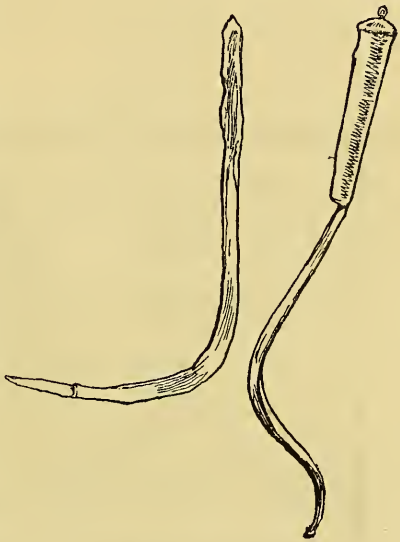
These military stations were of three kinds: (1) Legionary fortresses, capable of holding the 5000 men who made up a legion, with their arms and equipment, including food-stuffs; (2) forts to be held by a cohort or *ala* of 500 (*cohors quingenaria* if of foot-soldiers, *ala quingenaria* if of cavalry) or 1000 men (*cohors miliaria*, *ala miliaria*); (3) blockhouses, manned by outposts, whose number would vary according to necessity.

[1] Roman remains have been found at Hay; Ffrith; Pontrufydd Hall; Rhyddgaer (the small blockhouse in Anglesey referred to in the text); Dolaucothy and Pumpsaint, in the parish of Caio, where gold-mines were worked by the Romans; Penygaer, midway between Gaer and Abergavenny; Neath and Loughor, on the South Wales coast; and at Pyle, Castle Flemish, and Ford, near St. David's. Some of these remains leave it doubtful whether forts were built in some of the places mentioned.

PLATE XVII. SEATED FIGURE OF A GODDESS

*From "Archæologia," vol. lxii, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London*

In none of the military posts were women permitted to reside. In none were civilians allowed to live. In none were baths to be found. It must not be thought that the Roman soldier did not bathe. The Romans had a saying that they conquered the world with the strigil [1] rather than with the sword. The meaning of this was that the bath, together with the gymnastic exercises connected therewith, rendered the muscles so supple and strong that the Roman soldier rarely met his match in hand-to-hand fighting. It is therefore to be expected that a bath would generally be found near a fort. In fact, these were always placed just outside the fort wall, near a well or a stream. The bath used was the hot-air type invented by Sergius Orata, who lived in the time of L. Crassus, the orator.[2] These baths were doubtless placed outside the camp for the same reason that, in the laws of Howel, forbade baths and smithies within a defined distance of a hamlet—the risk of fire was too great.



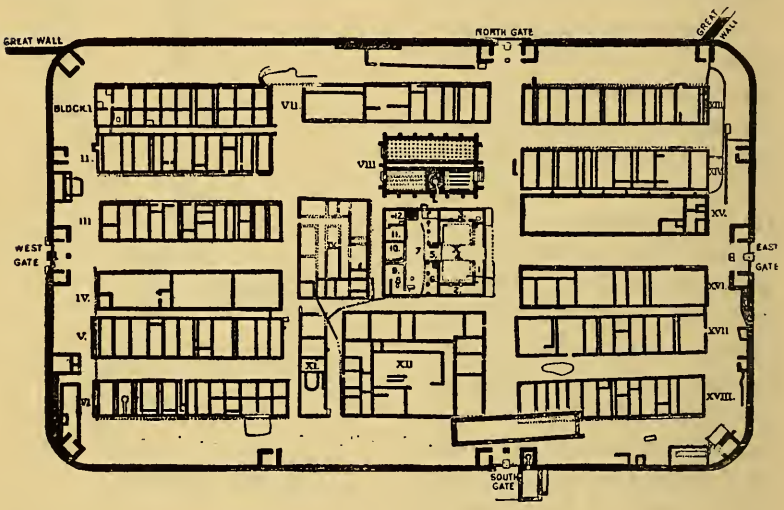
ROMAN STRIGILS

The fort itself, whether large or small, was generally of the same type. Enclosed by a rectangular wall having rounded

[1] The scraper used like the rubber in a modern Turkish bath. It was the emblem of the bath, and a representation of it was frequently sculptured over the main doorway.

[2] We need hardly remind the reader that the bath, though a source of Roman strength in the beginning, was a cause, among many others, of Roman decadence. Such practices as bathing in asses' milk or in water loaded with perfumes became fashionable. Mixed bathing, of course, early became common, and in the later Empire an altogether extravagant amount of time and money were spent on the baths.

corners and sometimes protected by one or two ditches, the main buildings, which were sometimes of stone, sometimes of brick, and sometimes of wood, or an admixture of all three, consisted of a central headquarters for the officers, commandant, and staff, a granary and stables, and, as a rule, on the other side of the central building a series of barracks for the soldiers. Between the outer wall and the inner buildings




PLAN OF A ROMAN FORT AT HOUSESTEADS, ON HADRIAN'S WALL

From Professor F. J. Haverfield's *Military Aspects of Roman Wales*, by permission of the author.

was a parade-ground, entered from the outside by four doorways symmetrically placed.

Outside the walls of the fort, as time went on, a small or large town would grow up. The inhabitants, taking advantage of the peace which the presence of the soldiers created, drove a thriving trade with the soldiers, each other, and the surrounding districts. As a natural development, we find definite industries being established in certain places, perhaps by the townsmen; though it is probable that the soldiers kept

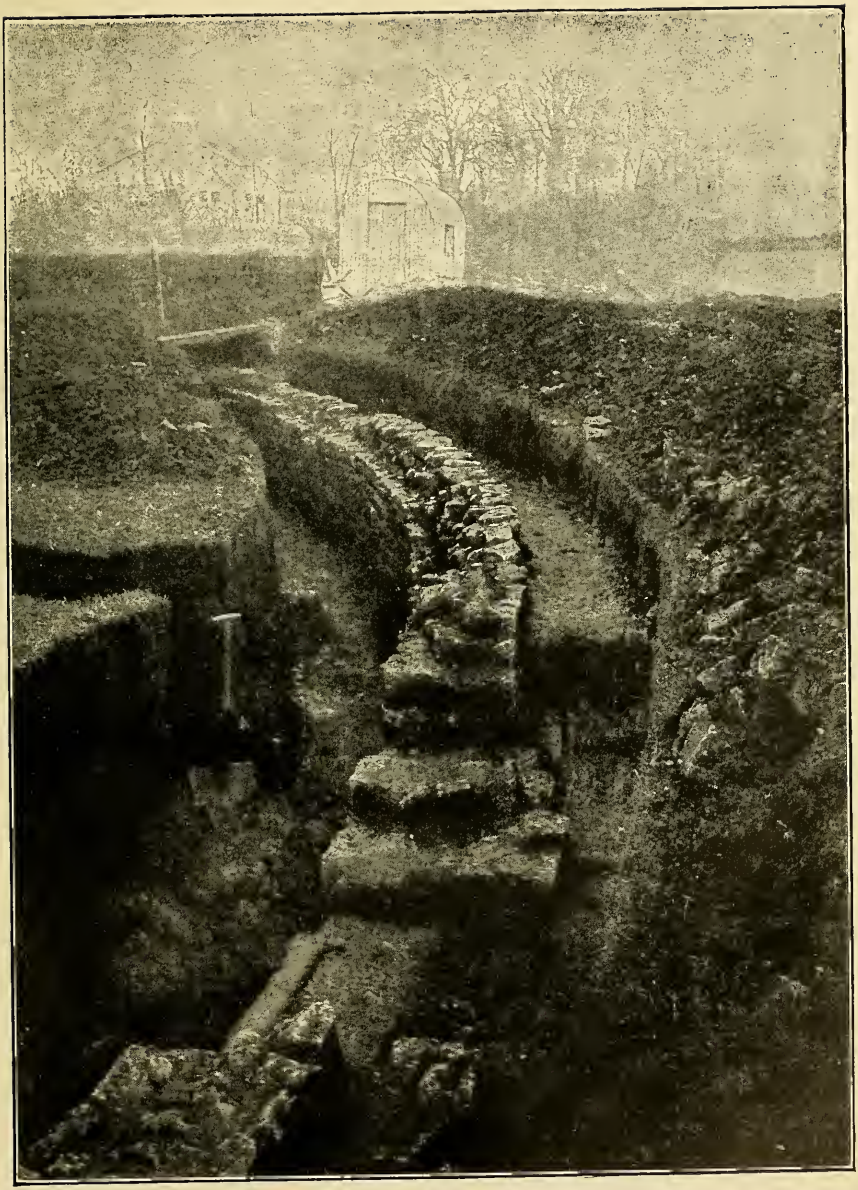


PLATE XVIII. CAERWENT: THE ROUND TEMPLE

*From "Archæologia," by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London*

in their own hands the profits which accrued from, if not the working of, the copper-, lead-, and gold-mines which were opened in Wales.

## The Influence of Roman Civilization on Britain

It will of course be known to the reader that the Roman army was a long-service force. It was a life-work to be a Roman soldier, and consequently it was necessary to provide the worn-out veteran with a means of livelihood after his retirement from the service. The means adopted was the granting of land, rent and tax free, sometimes the granting of citizenship (many of the auxiliary forces were made up of *peregrini*, or of persons holding the status of Latins), with its many advantages. Further, from quite early times in the Empire the soldier on service was allowed to keep the profits of war (*peculium castrense*), which did not, like all other kinds of property, pass to the head of his family (his agnatic *pater*). The result was that many retired soldiers, some of whom had doubtless made fortunes in the course of their military careers, were dotted up and down England and Wales, established in broad acres and housed in pleasant villas of the Roman type.[1]

Another result flowed from the long-service system. Intermarriage with the people of the district governed was inevitable. We will not torment the reader with an account of the laws (which date from the first century of the Empire) dealing with intermarriage between the various classes which made up the Roman state. It is fairly obvious, however,

[1] With regard to the nature of the Roman occupation and as to whether it was purely military or whether it profoundly affected the people of early Britain, we consider the matter later. We add here the account given by Giraldus of Caerwent as it existed in his day. "Many signs of its former splendour are still visible: great palaces ornamented in past times with gilded roofs, in imitation of Roman magnificence, for they were first raised by Roman princes, and beautified with fine buildings; a town of immense size, remarkable hot baths, remains of temples and theatres, all encircled by fine walls, parts of which still remain. You may find there on all sides, both within and without the walls, underground buildings, aqueducts, subterraneous passages; and, what I think deserves notice, stoves contrived with strange art to transmit the heat insensibly through narrow tubes passing up the side walls."

that these enactments had in view, partly at any rate, the Roman soldier who was fighting Rome's battles on the frontier. The result was to bring the wife and the children within the sacred class of Roman citizens. In many cases, in well-nigh all, she became as high in social status as a Junian Latin. She was, in fact, neither a concubine nor a slave. The result was highly important both to Rome and to its subject states. When all is done and said, the bonds which spring from matrimony are one of the great binding forces of the world. It is therefore desirable to point out that for at least three centuries twelve thousand Roman soldiers—many of them citizens of Rome—were intermarrying with British women, and the children of these unions would be Roman citizens in many cases. Considering that Britain at that time was not thickly populated, remembering that about 10,000 of these troops were located in or near Wales, and bearing in mind that many of these soldiers, having married and having had families, doubtless retired to pleasant villas to spend the evening of their lives in ease and plenty with their British wives and Brito-Roman children, it will, we believe, be clear to the reader that the Roman occupation must have affected very vitally the lives of the people of this island.

### Romanization of Britain

Remembering the saying of Strabo that the Celts were a people eager for culture, we cannot be surprised to find scattered all over England and Wales remains which show, we believe quite clearly, that the Celts of both England and Wales were, toward the end of the occupation, fairly imbued with the Roman civilization. Until within quite recent years the view most commonly taken by historians has been that the occupation was purely military and that the evidence of Roman luxury is limited to small areas surrounding military posts. The writers who argue thus support their contentions by pointing out that inscriptions found relate mainly to soldiers and rarely to civilians; that the privileged municipalities were few; that the native speech (now Welsh) differs entirely from Latin and

PLATE XIX. BILINGUAL SEPULCHRAL MONUMENT

has derived but few words from Latin. We confess that we should have thought the burden of evidence pointed the other way. It is true that the occupation was, if we view the matter narrowly, a military one, but the disposition of the legions—viz. the Second at Caerleon-upon-Usk (later to Richborough, near the Isle of Thanet), the Ninth, or subsequently the Sixth (after the final destruction of that legion by the barbarians in the reign of Hadrian), at York, and the Twentieth at Chester—shows that it was almost entirely directed against what is now Wales on the west and Caledonia or Scotland on the north (and later against the Saxon pirates, who were already beginning to be troublesome, on the south-east). It is fairly clear that the bulk of the soldiers in Britain were generally employed in keeping the Wall which stretched from the Tyne to the Solway, or in guarding the Welsh marches. The part of Britain now called England would seem to have been peaceful. This is shown by the Roman remains which we find all over England—magnificent roads, villas, towns, inscriptions showing the prevalence of the Roman religions, including Mithraism (which, Oriental in origin, seems to have been well favoured by the soldiers in Britain) and Christianity, which, of course, was the dominant religion of the Empire after the accession of Constantine, and probably long before—it quite possibly was introduced into Britain in the second century, or even earlier. It is also shown by the vast commercial advance made by the country, an advance which alone can account for the cosmopolitan crowds which came into Britain about this time. Many of these were doubtless soldiers who had been enlisted in far-off provinces, but that does not explain the presence of a Syrian merchant whose memory is preserved to us in those touching lines engraved in two languages on a sepulchral monument, which tell of his love for his wife Regina, a Briton. After a fuller Latin inscription follows one in Oriental characters. It reads: "Regina, the freedwoman of Barate, alas!" This same stone also represents this British woman, sometime a slave, holding a jewel-box and implements of needlework.

Again, is not the civilizing influence of Rome proved by such discoveries as that of a glass manufactory of considerable size which has been found near the Manchester Ship Canal at Warrington? The enormous number of examples of Samian ware, coins, and objects of domestic ornament scattered up and down the country point the same way.

It is a moot point, but one which deserves much attention, as to whether the form of land tenure which existed in Wales for centuries, and which lived on in England in a modified form and was merged into the Continental feudal system (with an important variation due to the political genius of William I), is not descended from the Roman villa system. We believe that this and similar questions can only be rightly understood when the fact is appreciated that the Anglo-Saxons, when they invaded Britain, were barbarians invading a rich and prosperous country inhabited in the main by a highly civilized people. These people, the Brythons, were, of course, the direct ancestors, not of the English, but of the Welsh.

### Roman Roads

In one direction, however, the Romans bequeathed less to Wales than to England. Their roads, which traverse England in many directions, have left few traces in Wales. One of the best known is perhaps that which runs southward from Caerhun over the hills to western Merionethshire and thence to South Wales. Even this road, known to the country-folk for centuries by the name of Sarn Helen, is only capable of identification with complete certainty for a distance of ten or twelve miles. Again, from the Itinerary of Antoninus and from milestones which have been recovered we know that a road ran from Caermarthen along the south coast of Wales to the legionary fortress of Isca Silurum (Caerleon-upon-Usk), but, as Professor Haverfield says, "Not a yard of it can be laid down for certain on the map." He adds: "We can trace a road from Llanio by Llandovery to the Gaer near Brecon, and, as it seems, down the Usk valley to Caerleon. Here, too, a long void inter-

PLATE XX. ROMAN MILESTONE, FOUND AT RHIWIAU, LLANFAIR-FECHAN, CO. CARNARVON

venes in the middle between Brecon and Abergavenny, and the section from Abergavenny to Caerleon, though attested by the Itinerary, has not yet been discovered on the ground." The roads near Caersws and the road across the Glamorgan hills are in like case. We have reason to believe that they are there, but few traces of actual remains are known, and as to the other Roman roads in Wales we have no knowledge at all.

### Roman Pottery and Remains

Though Wales is thus defective in remains of Roman roads, it possesses perhaps its fair share of the treasures which have been dug out from the ruins of Roman cities and houses in England. Caerwent and Wroxeter are of course the two most important towns in Roman Wales. These places seem quite early to have become centres of civil rather than military activity. To enter upon an adequate account of these remains is both impossible and undesirable in a general history of Wales. We cannot stay to consider the town-hall, the baths, the blacksmith's forge, the shops of Uriconium (or, to use its earlier name, Viroconium), nor may we deal with the modern excavations at Caerwent. It may, however, be permissible to add a few notes on Roman pottery.

The most important kind of Roman pottery, and the only kind which we shall consider, is that known as Samian ware. Within recent years, thanks mainly to the researches of Hans Dragendorff, Konstantin Koenen, and J. Déchelette, some strides have been made toward the dating of the various specimens of Samian which have been discovered in various parts of the Roman Empire. Styles and types have been classified, and the numbers assigned to the various types by Dr. Dragendorff have passed into current use.

The types most commonly found in Wales are numbers 29 and 37. Occasionally 30 is also found.[1] Form 29, which is somewhat fragile, being moulded or turned very thinly, is

[1] In the descriptions which follow we are dealing with vases in shape something like a modern flower-bowl or flower-pot.

distinguishable by a rim having a kind of engine-turned surface and a bend in the middle of its side which divides the decoration into two separate bands. The decorations are formal or consist of animal shapes. Representations of human figures occur, but are rare. Its period is about A.D. 30–85. It was therefore in use in Britain for a comparatively few years. Form 37 came into use about A.D. 65–70. It had the advantage of being much stronger than Form 29, but its glaze was inferior. It was probably cheap, and is found in great quantity. These qualities kept it in favour for a hundred and fifty years. It was hemispherical in shape, with a plain rim. Its style of decoration varied with the period, but as time went on the presence of human figures, sometimes isolated, sometimes in groups, became common. Form 30 is so rarely found in Wales that it is hardly necessary to consider it. It was in shape straight-sided and cylindrical.

This ware was largely imported mainly from Gaul and Germany. The Welsh imported examples nearly all came from the Lezouz potteries, in the Allier valley. Even the names of the potters have been preserved to us. Of the artists who worked at Lezouz perhaps Divixtus, Butrio, and Libertus were the best known. Many examples of pottery which have come down to us are, of course, of local manufacture.

### Famous Romans in Britain

We cannot leave this chapter of Welsh history to turn to the rude cruelties that await us without some note or comment on the great names which pass before us as we study the slender materials which compose the history of Britain for this present period. As every one knows, Hadrian paid a lengthy visit to Britain, and, according to some authorities, built the Roman wall (the one between the Tyne and the Solway; the more northerly wall, between the Firth of Forth and the Clyde, was built in the reign of Antoninus Pius). The next great visitor whom we shall mention is Septimius Severus, who, though racked with gout, old and ill, pushed on for months through the forests of Caledonia. He took with him his sons Caracalla and Geta,

PLATE XXI. EXAMPLES OF SAMIAN WARE AND ROMAN CUT GLASS

that they might regain health of body and mind in the sterner and more rigorous exercises of a military campaign. Caracalla showed his appreciation of this banishment from his pleasures by attempting to murder his father, an attempt which, being discovered, induced Severus to offer a sword to his son with the words, "If you desire to slay me, here is the sword." Severus eventually died at York, a city which also saw the dissolution of that brave spirit Constantius Chlorus. In connexion with the campaign of Severus it is desirable to mention the name of Papinian, 'the prince of lawyers,' who accompanied his royal master to Britain. It will probably be known to many readers that the Valentinian Law of Citations, which named five great lawyers, Papinian, Ulpian, Gaius, Paulus, and Modestinus, as those whose opinions were to be accepted as correct, provided that in case of dispute the voice of Papinian was to be supreme. This man, then, Rome's greatest lawyer, spent a considerable time in Britain—for the most part at York. It was from the death-bed of Constantius Chlorus that his favourite son, the child of the saintly Helena, the future emperor and founder of the Eastern capital, Constantine the Great, hurried from Britain to play his part in the great game of empire-grabbing. It was from Britain that the 'honest usurper' Maximus led his legions against Gratian; a campaign which resulted in the murder of Gratian, and finally, after five years of fighting and a few months of imperial power, in the death of Maximus himself.

The end of the occupation began with the crisis caused by Alaric's attempted descent upon Rome (*c.* A.D. 400). Stilicho, the brave Vandal, guardian of Honorius, preserved the Empire for the time being, but Rome was weakened and its soldiers in the outlying provinces or vicarages were recalled. Britain thus lost the Twentieth Legion. The other two, doubtless much reduced in strength, remained. They too, however, pass from the scene of this history when a certain Constantine, once a private soldier, now a candidate for the imperial purple, led them to Gaul.

With the departure of the legions the most pleasant part of

the early history of Wales is complete. We now enter upon centuries of war. It is one long story of fighting which never seems to end. War with the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Picts, Scots, war with themselves, war with the Normans, it is a sorry story which justifies the piteous lamentations of Gildas.

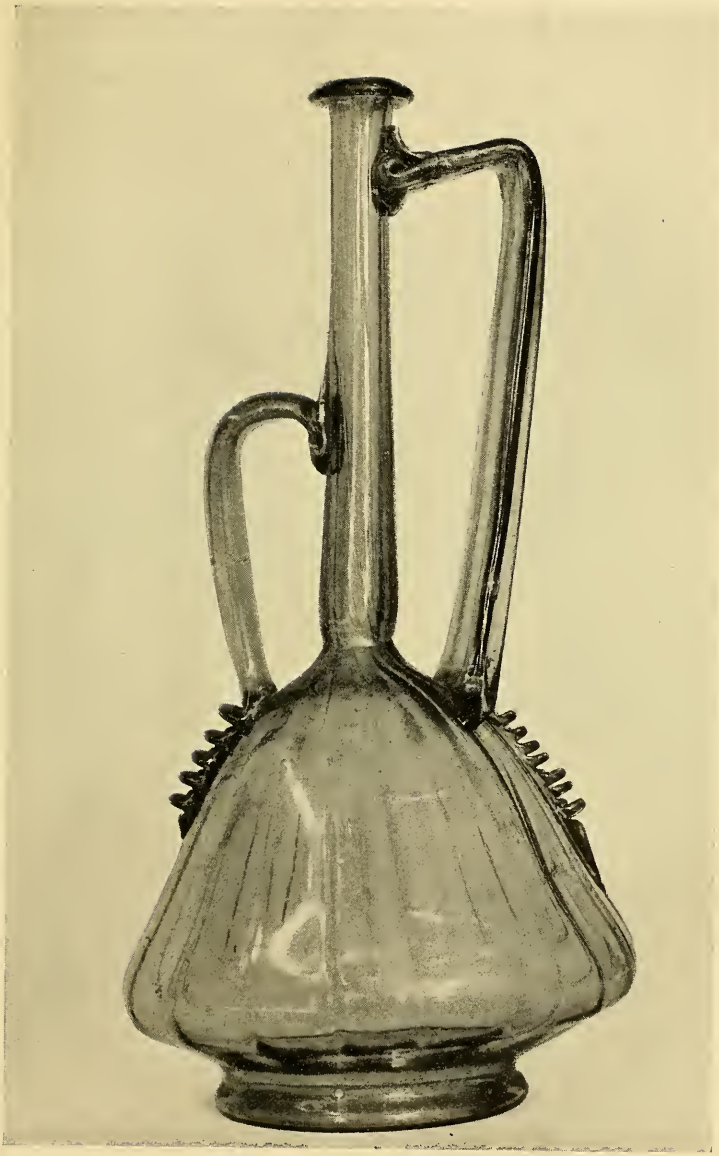


PLATE XXII. ROMAN JUG OF PALE OLIVE-GREEN GLASS.

# CHAPTER V

## THE ANGLO-SAXON INVASION

WE have now reached the year 407. We have remarked how, at that time, the inhabitants of this island were mainly Brythons, Romanized Brythons who had been for well-nigh four centuries in close contact with the civilizing influences of the Empire. Towns had been founded, industries encouraged, literature and learning advanced. The Christian religion had been introduced, together with other more Eastern philosophies. Britain had, in fact, become a part, and perhaps not the rudest part, of the polite Roman world.

We have now to speak of a barbarian invasion which not only stopped but set back the hands of the clock of progress; which drove the Brythons from the more fertile shires of England into the mountains of Cumberland and Wales, and into the peninsula of Cornwall; which established in England itself new stock, part of a different race, introducing fresh customs and characteristics, submerging, if not exterminating, in many parts of the country the earlier British people, making it necessary to give a new name to the land they had conquered. Even as Pictish Albion became the Brythanic Islands with the coming of the Brython, so Britain became Angle-land with the conquests of the Anglo-Saxons.

From the period when these conquests were complete we shall find the geographical extent of this history narrowed down to what is now Wales (with certain trifling differences). Within those borders the Welsh nation has since been confined.

### Commencement of the Saxon Invasion

Even in the time of the Roman occupation a significant moving of the quarters of the Second Legion from Caerleon-upon-Usk to Rutupiae, or Richborough, near to the Isle of Thanet, in the fourth century showed that these northern pirates and sea-rovers were beginning their depredations. We read in the *Notitia Imperii* (published *c.* 400) of "the Count of the Saxon Shore in Britain," and it is known that fortifications were necessary even at that time at Branodunum (Brancaster, in Norfolk), Gariannonum (Caistor, near Yarmouth), Othona (in Essex), Regulbium (Reculver, in Kent), Rutupiae, Dubrae (Dover), Lemannae (Lymne), Anderida, and Portus Adurni. It is therefore probable that we must date the commencement of the Saxon invasion from the beginning of the fifth century, though of course the newcomers obtained no sure footing in the island until much later. Prosper Tiro, the contemporary of St. Augustine, tells us that in the fifteenth year of Arcadius and Honorius (A.D. 409) "the strength of the Romans was utterly wasted by sickness, and the provinces of Britain were laid waste by the incursion of the Saxons." Speaking of the year 441, he uses words which suggest that the Saxons were beginning to establish themselves permanently in England. This date is eight years earlier than that mentioned by Bede.

### Maximus, or Maxen Wledig

There was another and an earlier event which must be borne in mind when considering the overthrow of the Brythons. Toward the end of the fourth century a Roman court official of humble origin named Maximus was quartered in Britain. This man, a Spaniard by birth, was destined to win for a short time an empire, to deplete a country of its youth, and to become the hero of a Welsh romance. Taking advantage while in Britain of the discontent which the misrule of Gratian had brought about, this adventurer caused himself to be elected emperor, placed himself at the head of an army which

comprised a large part of the bravest and most adventurous youth of Britain, crossed over to the Continent, met, defeated, and slew Gratian, obtained control of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, which he ruled justly, and at last fell, after having worn the imperial purple for a few months. This was the Maxen of Welsh romance. That he left a deep impression on the minds of men in Britain is unquestionable. He was looked upon by them as a leader worthy to be followed, as a great fighter and a national hero. For our present purpose, however, we must insist only upon the salient fact that he led from Britain almost all the best fighting men. This cannot but have had a serious effect upon the fortunes of the country when it had to grapple with barbarian invaders. It is, indeed, significant that it was shortly after this adventurous career of Maximus that the Saxons begin to appear with ever-increasing frequency. Britain, now weakened by the loss of its youth on many a Gaulish battlefield, was soon to lose the remnants of the legionaries. Thus denuded of its fighting men, it is not surprising that the Saxons commenced to come ever more frequently to the attack.

### Vortigern

It was not, however, until toward the middle of the fifth century that the invaders actually obtained a permanent footing in this island, and then, according to the old historians, it was rather the folly of a British king than defeat in war that was responsible for the intrusion. The position of the island defenders was, however, extremely difficult, and it is doubtful whether Vortigern, who is generally held responsible for the commencement of the Saxon settlement, could avoid taking the fatal step for which in the following centuries he was so bitterly blamed.[1]

[1] Roger of Wendover tells the story as follows. Speaking of Hengist and Horsa, who had, according to Roger, come to help Vortigern against the Picts and Scots, he says: "When at last they stood before the king, he asked them respecting the faith and religion of their ancestors, on which Hengist replied, 'We worship the gods of our fathers—Saturn, Jupiter, and the other deities who govern the world, and especially Mercury, whom in our tongue we call Woden, and to whom our fathers dedicated the fourth

The position of affairs at this time may perhaps be stated as follows. The northern wall which under Roman rule had kept the Picts or Caledonians of Scotland at bay for centuries was now practically undefended or insufficiently defended. The result was that the barbarians of the north succeeded in accomplishing what they had for years been attempting to do—break the southern bonds which kept them from the fertile land of north central Britain. Vortigern, who was then, perhaps, one of the strongest of the British leaders, found it impossible to withstand the northern barbarians for the reasons which we have shortly stated above, and consequently called in the aid of the Saxons, promising a grant of land in southern Britain as payment for the alliance. The Saxons came, the barbarians were, perhaps, checked, but one enemy had been exchanged for another, and the second state of Britain was worse than the first!

Who this Vortigern was, if, indeed, he is not entirely legendary, we do not know with any accuracy. If we identify him with King Gwrtheyrn and follow Sir John Rhys we must regard him as the Goidelic king of the Brythons of that part of Britain called in later times Powys. It will perhaps be remembered that in the third century a Goidelic tribe called the Dési had come from Ireland to South Wales and had established itself in that country. Sir John would give to the words 'Gwrtheyrn Gwrtheneu,' in the *Brut*, which Williams ab Ithel translated as 'Vortigern of Repulsive Lips,' the meaning that Vortigern spoke a language which was unknown to his subjects—that, in fact, he was a Goidel ruling Brythons. From this, in conjunction with other facts, he suggests that Vortigern the Goidel was either the founder or an important member of the Goidelic dynasty of Powys, and possibly an

day of the week, which to this day is called "Wodensday." Next to him we worship the most powerful goddess Frea, to whom they dedicated the sixth day, which, after her, we call "Friday."' 'I grieve much,' said Vortigern, 'for your belief or rather for your unbelief; *but I am exceedingly rejoiced at your coming*, which, whether brought about by God *or otherwise*, is most opportune for my urgent necessities.'" We have lost the *naïveté* of those old chroniclers!

ancestor of that Eliseg whose name is preserved to us on a pillar still standing in the neighbourhood of Valle Crucis Abbey, near Llangollen. However this may be, we may perhaps regard Vortigern as a British king of importance. He is mentioned by name by Bede and is referred to by Gildas, and, as we have seen, is spoken of in the *Brut* as well as in the later chronicles. According to Bede and the *Chronicle*, the date when the Saxons were called in to his aid was 449, and their reward consisted in the gift of lands in Kent. Thus the newcomers obtained a footing, and having done so they seem to have lost little time in acquainting their kinsfolk oversea of the wealth of the new country and the 'nothingness' of its inhabitants.

### Invaders from Ireland

It is probable that it was not merely against the Picts and the Angles and Saxons that the Britons had to contend. Apart from the early migration of the Dési tribe, it is fairly certain that throughout the fourth century the Scots from Ireland had been making frequent depredations on the western shore of Britain. If Gildas is to be believed, they came over the Irish Sea in small boats called coracles, each holding but a few men. But though the men in each boat were few the boats themselves were many. That they caused great loss to the western part of the island is probable, that they settled in ever-increasing numbers is possible. It was the age when the Goidels avenged the losses which the Britons had inflicted upon them in the earlier times of which we have already spoken.

### Causes of Britain's Weakness

Bearing in mind that the Britons were thus faced on the one hand with heavy losses due to the withdrawal of their best blood to fight the battles of Maximus—and that this best was very good is shown by the fact that Maximus won for himself, for a few short months at any rate, the rulership of the Western world—and to the decline of Roman power, with the consequent withdrawal of the legions, and on the other

hand with three barbarous and warlike nations, each desiring to filch away part of the wealth which Roman rule had created, we believe that the reader will find that the defenders of Britain were neither the *nithing* men that the Angles thought them to be nor the degenerate cowards that the Briton Gildas would have us regard them as being.

### The Saxon Attack

With regard to the struggle which followed we propose to say but little, the reason being that the Anglo-Saxon conquest belongs rather to the history of England than to that of Wales. It is evident, however, that the Welsh were much more concerned with the northern invasions than with those of the south. Whether the southern Britons ever retreated to Wales in sufficient numbers to carry with them a memory of their former history is extremely doubtful. It would seem that they were, to a large extent, overwhelmed by their conquerors. In the north, however, the story is different. Right up to the time of the battle of Winwaed the chieftains of Wales and of Strathclyde were, intermittently at any rate, working together to defeat and overcome the invader.

As to the Anglo-Saxon conquests in the south, these we propose to pass over very quickly. Right from the beginning battles were very frequent. In 455 Hengist and Horsa, the leaders of the new-comers, fought against Vortigern; the year following Hengist and Aesc (the successor of Horsa, who was slain in the earlier battle) slew 4000 Britons; in 465 they are again found fighting with the Britons (Welshmen[1]) and inflicting heavy loss, for we read that many Welsh nobles fell in this engagement. By 473 the conquest of Kent was well-nigh complete, but it had not been gained without nearly twenty years of fiercely contested battles. The conquest of Sussex now began. In 477 and 485 two more battles were fought against the Welsh, with much loss of life, and in 491 occurred the massacre of Anderida—the Roman camp already

[1] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* always uses the term 'Welshman' (or *Wealas*)—*i.e.* foreigners or enemies—when referring to the Britons.

referred to—where all the inhabitants were put to the sword. By 495, when another important engagement took place, the invaders had pushed still farther along the southern shore, and had reached, apparently, almost as far as Southampton. Wessex was now the object of their attack. Battles were constantly being fought, and by 530 the Isle of Wight was in the hands of the Saxons. After forty years of continuous warfare (apart from the fighting in the south-east) the newcomers could claim Hampshire and the Isle of Wight as conquered territory.

Right through the sixth century the struggle continues, the earlier inhabitants being driven ever farther west or slain or reduced to slavery. Towns were swept away, and the cities which had been raised in Roman times overthrown, sacked, pillaged, and destroyed. A stubborn and continued resistance was undoubtedly made by the Britons. For at least a hundred and fifty years the struggle went on. Nor were the battles few and far between; on the contrary, it seems to have been one long-continued battle. It was a war of dispossession, a war between a warlike and a numerous people and a brave but peaceful nation fighting for its life and its nationality.

### Results of the Saxon Invasion

The modern mind has some difficulty in imagining what those dreadful years must have been like to the Britons. They had lived in almost perfect peace (in the south) for centuries before the departure of the Romans. Even if we had to rely solely upon the evidence of Gildas, we should know that they were accustomed to live in cities with solid walls, well-planned citadels, with well-built houses. They were accustomed to all the commercial methods of Rome. Their goods were housed in warehouses and shops. Churches were built. Justice was administered in imposing basilicas and town-halls. Orchards were planted and gardens flourished.[1] The state of Roman Britain was both peaceful and pleasant. It was upon

[1] Compare Giraldus Cambrensis' account of Caerwent in the thirteenth century, given as a footnote to p. 59.

this fair and wealthy country that the storm of barbarian invasion broke. For a hundred and fifty years the men of Britain defended their homes and attempted to beat back the tide of conquest. Saxon, Angle, Jute, Pict, and Scot in turn, or all at once, swept down upon them. The cities were destroyed, the gardens laid waste, the accumulated wealth of Roman times seized. The defenders who had at first fought to preserve their property now fought to preserve their lives. Even this they barely succeeded in doing. Rome was appealed to, but Rome could not hear. Generation succeeded generation and still the hideous devastation continued. Toward the end Britons must have been fighting against Saxons who hardly knew the meaning and the purpose of the buildings, of the pottery, of the wall-surrounded orchards, now fruitless and overgrown with weeds, which in the times of their great-grandfathers had been possessed by men of their own rank and of their own nation. Roman culture had been neutralized by Saxon barbarity.[1]

At the end of the struggle, when the Britons had been beaten back to the fastnesses of Wales, they carried with them, as we shall see, but a faint memory of the arts, crafts, and learning of Roman times. They were once more a pastoral people, living in houses rudely constructed, made to be readily movable, planned so that the inhabitants could readily leave them without great loss. Gardens and orchards were almost unknown, corn was relied upon less than milk and meat. The people themselves were hardy, used to the rigours of an open-air life, asking but little of life save liberty.[2] All this must be borne in mind if the subsequent history of Wales is to be understood. As we shall see, in the years to come it was just this simplicity of life, this hardihood, this mobility, which made the conquest of Wales by the Normans almost impossible.

Nothing strikes the student of the early history of Britain

[1] It was a similar blight, falling upon southern Europe, which broke down Roman and Byzantine culture, heralded the Dark Ages, and plunged Europe into ignorance for at least six hundred years.

[2] Giraldus, writing in the thirteenth century, describes the Welshman of his day in very similar terms. The Renaissance had not yet arrived.

so forcibly as the difference between the Anglo-Saxon invasion and the Norman Conquest. Hengist, Aelle, Cissa, Cerdic, Cynric, Ceawlin, Cutha, Ceolwulf, and the rest rise up to lead the Saxon invaders. Ten years pass, a century passes, and a few acres are won, a county is lost, a province is wrested from the Britons. On the other hand, William landed in 1066, fought one important battle, and was crowned king, and although some attempts at revolt and resistance were made subsequently, they were but half-hearted, and William, after but a short reign, was enabled to transfer a well-established crown to his son. The reason probably is that the invasion was indeed an invasion, the conquest but a conquest. The Saxons came as a people to dispossess and destroy a people; William came leading his Normans to gain a throne and govern a people. There was no question of a general dispossession.

### The Hallelujah Victory

Though it would be undesirable in a short history of Wales to give an account in detail of the Saxon invasion, we have thought it useful to point out its general effect. It is also necessary to advert to a few battles which more nearly touch our subject.

The first great victory which the Britons won over the Picts and Saxons, or Scots, took place almost at the commencement of the struggle, in about 429. Germanus, who had been sent by Pope Celestine to attempt to purge the Britons of the Pelagian heresy, had, after working several miracles, at last succeeded in winning the confidence of the nation he had been sent to teach or improve. It was he who was the hero of this encounter, known to history as the Hallelujah Battle, and the victory was due less to the bravery of the Britons—which, indeed, was not tested—than to his strategy. Assembling his none too numerous host in a valley surrounded by mountains,[1] he caused them on a given signal to shout with one

[1] The site of this battle was probably near Mold, in Flintshire, probably at Rhual, in the place now occupied by the park of Lieut.-Colonel B. E. Philips.

voice the word 'Hallelujah!' This shout, echoing from the surrounding hills, was magnified into such a roar of triumph that the opposing army, feeling themselves overwhelmed by numbers, fled, leaving their arms behind them in their fear. The victory was at once complete and bloodless.

According to the two historians Gildas and Nennius, who were both Britons,[1] early in the sixth century an important victory was won by their countrymen at the battle of Mount Badon. The stories are conflicting and confused, but it would seem that the battle did actually occur, and not improbably it accounts for the comparative peacefulness of Cynric's reign. It is not known who was the leader of the British. Gildas talks of Ambrosius Aurelianus, the last Roman descended from the imperial house left in Britain; Nennius gives us as leader that quasi-historical hero Arthur. The *Annales Cambriae* also assigns the victory to Arthur, and gives the date of the battle as 516. It is not known where the battle was fought. Some think it was on the Welsh border, possibly in South Wales; some believe it took place in Scotland. It does not appear to have been noticed by historians generally that there were two battles fought on Mount Badon, according to the *Annales Cambriae*, the second one being assigned to the year 665, on which occasion a certain Morcant was slain.

These two victories would appear to be the only considerable ones won by the Britons of which we have any account—unless we are to regard the battle of Fethan-lea, fought in 584 by Ceawlin and Cutha against the Britons, as a Saxon reverse. The statement in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is ambiguous. On the other hand, the invaders won two decisive battles which we must mention, since they resulted in the Britons of Wales being cut off from their countrymen of Cornwall on the one side and of Strathclyde on the other. The first of these victories was that of Deorham in 577, the other was the victory of Chester in *c.* 613. The events leading up to these battles and the battles themselves we will now consider shortly.

[1] Nennius is an unknown quantity. Some think there never was such a person, and refer to his work of the *Historia Brittonum* simply.

## Deorham

In 571 an important victory had been won by the Saxons at Bedford, which resulted in the occupation of several towns in Oxfordshire and Bucks, and doubtless established a base from which the invading army could push on up the Severn to the Dee. By 577 the Saxons appear to have got as far as Gloucestershire, a progress so slow that it would seem to tell of some long-protracted siege or of continual petty warfare. However this may be, the Saxons appeared in that year at Deorham, a place some ten miles east of Bristol. Ceawlin, with Cuthwine his brother, led the Saxons; Coinmail, Condidan, and Farnmail [1] headed the Brythons. The result was clearly an overwhelming victory for the Saxon arms. All the British leaders were slain. The cities of Gloucester, Cirencester, and Bath (Bathan-Ceaster) fell to the conquerors. As we have said, the Cymry of Cornwall and Somerset were cut off from their more northern kinsmen, and finally the way was open for the Saxons' advance up the valley of the Severn. It seems highly probable that this advance was one continuous massacre of a leaderless and beaten people by a savage invader. We read that many towns and vast quantities of booty were taken by Ceawlin, until at last, in 584, when he fought the battle of Fethan-lea (possibly somewhere in Cheshire), where his son was slain, he "departed in anger to his own land." It is to this campaign that we must trace the destruction of the Roman city of Viroconium.[2]

This important town, which now lies a ruin, mostly buried under fields which have been ploughed for centuries, can still be traced from some of the more important remains which appear above the surface of the soil. Parts of the site have

[1] Descended from Pascent, son of Vortigern or Gwrtheyrn, according to Rhys in *Y Cymmrodor* (vol. xxi, p. 57).

[2] Sir John Rhys has suggested that the destruction of Viroconium (called in later times Uriconium) may have been the work of the Goidelic invaders of Wales who came from Ireland in the time of, or after, the migration of the Dési tribe. For the suggestion see his article entitled *All Around the Wrekin*, in *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xxi. We prefer to regard it as the work of the Saxons.

been opened up by the spade of the excavator. Lying some eight miles from Shrewsbury and some seven miles from Wellington, it well repays a visit, being one of the most interesting and tragic ruins of the kind in this country. There still remains visible part of the wall of the basilica or judgment-hall, built in the Roman manner, and doubtless used by the Romans as the centre of administration and justice. Near by are the ruins of the baths, a luxury which the Romans at all times and in all places seem to have found necessary. This near juxtaposition of the baths to the court reminds one forcibly of the rule of Roman law whereby it was provided that slaves could be manumitted by the master mentioning the matter to the praetor (judge) even on the way to the baths. There one can see Roman pottery, the outline of Roman shops, including a smithy, and the general plan of a Roman street. Ploughmen are constantly turning up parts of buried skeletons in the vicinity. This, then, was the Roman town, and this is what Ceawlin left of it. Perhaps the bones of the family of Llywarch Hên, the great Cymric poet and the founder of a form of poetry, lie buried there even yet. That his children perished in the general massacre is certain.

To return. The battle of Fethan-lea seems to have marked the boundary of the Saxon advance at that time. Ceawlin was beaten back and for a while there was peace. But soon the Angles well-nigh completed what the Saxons commenced—the isolation of Wales from the rest of the Cymry. Before passing on to the short description of the battle by which this was accomplished, we would remind the reader that in 594 Augustine had set out on his great mission to endeavour to bring the barbarian Saxon within the Church. Centuries before this, of course, the Brythons had known Christianity, had even been tainted or acquainted with the Pelagian philosophy, or heresy as some say. They had strong beliefs, and Augustine does not seem to have approached the leaders of the ancient British Church in a particularly tactful manner. At this time the chief seat of learning in Britain was Bangor, in the county of Flint (now a little hamlet on the side of the

Dee). From the monastery there established (it contained over two thousand inmates) the learned ecclesiastics came to speak with Augustine. It is perhaps worth bearing in mind, especially by those who are tempted to regard the Cymry of those days as a wild and barbarous people, that the following disputation was concerned with the precise day on which Easter should be held, an argument based mainly on astronomy —a science in which the Welsh seem to have been proficient. The result was an open quarrel between the new and the old sect—a quarrel which wrought Augustine to prophesy the ruin and overthrow of the Britons by their enemies the Angles and Saxons, whom St. Augustine was endeavouring to win over to his creed and religion. We echo and repeat the words of the late Dr. Hodgkin—echo because we cannot improve, repeat because we respect: "It was a golden opportunity that was offered for the reconciliation of two great hostile races at the feet of one Saviour, and that opportunity lost never returned. The wound which the Saxon invasions had caused, still comparatively fresh, might possibly have been then healed by first intention. Unhealed then, it went festering on for centuries; and more than once or twice since the days of Augustine, Christianity, which ought to be the great reconciler of men, has proved itself the great divider between Celt and Saxon."

## The Battle of Chester

Augustine's prophecy was only too fatally fulfilled. Some time about 613 Aethelfrith the Angle, king of Bernicia, led his army from York to Chester (or Caerlegion, as the Welsh chroniclers call it). The Britons had as vanguard a great number of monks from the monastery of Bangor, who had come to aid the Britons and their king Brochmail [1] with their prayers. Aethelfrith refused to regard them or their persons as sacred, and on learning that they rendered spiritual, or moral, if not active, support to his enemy, ordered his soldiers

[1] See *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xxi, p. 104 (table). There were many Brochmails. This king was probably of the house of Powys.

to attack them. The result was that more than a thousand monks were slain. Their prayers seem to have been of little aid either to them or to their king, for Brochmail, appalled at this disaster, hardly contested the fight, but fled with his men, utterly broken and demoralized. As a result of this complete victory Chester fell. It was sacked by the victor and remained a waste for centuries. As a more far-reaching result Strathclyde was cut off from the north of Wales; the Cymry of Cumberland were severed, almost for ever, from their one-time compatriots of Gwynedd. By that victory, in conjunction with the earlier one at Deorham, the Britons were driven into the part of Britain which is now Wales. The border counties, however, were still disputed territory. It was reserved for Wulfhere, Offa, and the Norman barons to draw the line which to-day severs England from the more ancient kingdom.

With these few disjointed facts we must be content in our treatment of the Saxon invasion, regarded from the point of view of invasion rather than of conquest. In the chapter following we shall have something to say of the leaders of the Welsh in those troublous times, but our knowledge of what was happening in Wales, or even in Strathclyde, during all this period is very indefinite; and as to the miseries which befell the Britons in England, that is a subject which is impertinent and out of place in a history of Wales, except in so far as it throws a light upon subsequent Welsh history.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE BIRTH OF THE CYMRY

SO far we have been looking at the history of Wales rather through the spectacles of the Romans and the Saxons. We have therefore on occasion used the foreigner's word—'Welsh,' 'Welshman' meaning a stranger, an enemy. Now we will, with the reader's permission, treat of this nation as the Cymry—the nation of compatriots, of brothers.

We have so far roughly pointed out how the aborigines were conquered by the Goidels; the Goidels by the Brythons, who forced them partly into the fastnesses of North and South Wales, driving in a wedge between the Goidels of North Wales and South Wales—a wedge represented in more recent times with substantial accuracy by the kingdom of Powys. We have seen how the Roman came, conquered, and civilized; how the Saxon and Angle invaded, massacred, and embruted. We have now restricted the geographical limits of our story to modern Wales and the border counties. Cornwall and the country of the West Welsh or the Southern Cymry is severed from the Cymry of Demetia. The Cymry of Strathclyde and Cumberland are divided by the rising power of Mercia from their kindred of Gwynedd.

We must now retrace our steps a little and see what has been happening through all the troublous times of the Anglo-Saxon invasion in Wales itself.

Two names stand out with some distinctness even as early as the later years of the Roman occupation. These are Vortigern and Cunedda. The former was king or chief of the Britons of mid-Wales, the latter was at first a chief of

North Britain who afterward came south with his tribe to fight against and finally overcome the Scots or Goidels of northern Wales. Of both these leaders we must say something.

### Cunedda Wledig

Cunedda Wledig (King Cunedda) came down from the north, probably from guarding the great wall built by Hadrian between the Tyne and the Solway Firth, to fight against those Goidels who had not improbably come over from Ireland to aid their countrymen of North Wales to conquer the Brythons of Powys-land. It would seem [1] that the Brythons of Central Wales, finding themselves hard pressed by the Goidels with the Scottish allies,[2] sent to their Brythonic kinsmen of Strathclyde for aid. Cunedda replied by leading in person his followers, including his sons, twelve in number.[3] This occurred late in the fourth or early in the fifth century—that is to say, after Maximus and shortly before the departure of the Roman legions and the coming of the Saxons. Cunedda came to aid; he remained to conquer. Of the details of the struggle we have no knowledge. In the result, however, we find him established as king of Gwynedd, and to him we must trace the foundation of that royal or princely house which ruled over their territory from the royal town of Deganwy, or, in later times, from Aberffraw, in Môn. All Cunedda's sons appear to have settled in Gwynedd except the eldest, who died in Scotland, leaving a son, Merion, who succeeded to what would have been his father's share of the spoils of the newly conquered territory. This Merion then appears to have ruled over the cantref Merion, from whence is derived the present name of the county of Merioneth.[4] Merion, after

[1] There are several conflicting theories current as to the exact relationship existing between Goidel and Brython in Wales during this period.

[2] The Scots at this time, we need hardly remind our readers, were Goidels who came from Ireland (from whence the Gaelic stream came first to Wales, and later, or perhaps contemporaneously, to western Scotland and the Isles).

[3] The *Annales Cambriae* gives nine, Nennius eight as the number.

[4] These derivations should be regarded as doubtful.

the death of his grandfather, Cunedda, seems to have been regarded as the head of his house, and we find him assigning to the other sons of Cunedda various tracts extending over Cardigan (Ceredigion, from Ceredig, another of the sons), Gwynedd, and Môn. Of course all this is extremely doubtful, our authorities being legends and legendary genealogies. But when one has no better historical guides it is necessary to accept their services, or for ever give up the attempt to find a path through the tangled history of early societies.

### Vortigern

The next king of the Cymry of whom we know something more than the mere name is Vortigern. Of him we have already spoken in the preceding chapter. He is probably later than Cunedda by about half a century, and ruled over Central Wales, and possibly over Herefordshire as well. Unlike Cunedda, he was, according to Sir John Rhys, a Goidel, so that we have the interesting spectacle of a Goidelic king ruling over the Brythons of Powys-land while a British king is ruling over the Goidels of North Wales. Vortigern, as we have already stated, is regarded by the old historians as responsible for the invitation to the Angles to aid him in repulsing the Picts, and under date 449 we find the interesting entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to the effect that "Wyrtgeorn invites the Angles to Britain. They come over in three keels and land at Heopwines-fleet, and he gives them land in the south-east of the country on condition of their fighting the Picts. This they do successfully, but they send home for more of their countrymen, telling them of the worthlessness of the Britons and the goodness of the land." [1] The result of that unhappy invitation we have already referred to. We merely add here that it would seem that Vortigern was a leader of much power in Britain, and if he were really a Goidel merely ruling over a division of Wales it is difficult to see why he should be acting

[1] We quote from the late Thomas Hodgkin's volume in *The Political History of England*, p. 88.

in this important matter alone when the step thus taken was one which obviously affected the whole of Britain.

After the death of Vortigern our knowledge of the Welsh leaders practically ceases for more than fifty years. Such names as Pascent and Eliseg, it is true, flit before us, but they are mere names preserved to us only in genealogies or in legends engraved upon the sculptured stone. It is not, indeed, until the year 500 that we come across the next ruler of whom we know anything of living interest.

### Dyfnwal Moelmud

The king of whom we now speak was Dyfnwal Moelmud, who is supposed to have lived at the commencement of the sixth century. He was apparently a leader of the Strathclyde Britons and a grandson of Coel Odebog. He became in later times and in bardic legend the first and greatest British legislator, and is mentioned as the author of the *Triads*[1] in the *Triads* themselves. These compilations, which we shall consider later, were, however, forgeries of a much later date, and consequently we can attach but little importance to what they say of their supposed author. We can assign about the same amount of weight to the statement of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who makes him the son of Cloten, king of Cornwall. The *Venedotian Code*, however, may perhaps be relied upon when it refers to him as a great measurer and settler of boundaries. We may therefore regard Dyfnwal as a person who did really live, and one who was famous as a lawgiver rather than as a soldier, but beyond that we can hardly go.

### Maelgwn Gwynedd

Following upon Dyfnwal in point of time, though probably ruling over a country widely separated from Dyfnwal's territory, was that Maelgwn Gwynedd of whom we find such a terrible picture painted in the pages of Gildas. He, with Vortigern, was made to share responsibility for the loss of Britain to the barbarians, and, like Vortigern, his main sin

[1] The *Triads* referred to are those printed in *The Ancient Laws of Wales*, vol. ii.

PLATE XXIII. ELISEG'S PILLAR 84
*Photo Lettsome & Sons, Llangollen*

probably consisted in the fact that he was a powerful man who attempted to resist without success.

Maelgwn Hir (the Tall), ruler of Gwynedd, the great-great-grandson of Cunedda, was certainly an outstanding figure in his time. Beginning his rise to power by the slaughter of his uncle and his uncle's troops, he seems to have shrunk before no crime which he felt was necessary to attain his ambition. If we would believe his detractors, we must hold him guilty of the murder of his wife and nephew, and as being the introducer of an unusual and unpleasant vice. That Gildas, whose contemporary he was, had some good cause to hate his name seems clear, but when we find him referring to Maelgwn's bards as " rascally, lying quacks who serve him [by] spitting out their bacchanalian ravings " we confess to a feeling that Gildas was prejudiced.[1] Good or bad, it is certain that the royal house of which he was a representative lasted until 1282, when Prince Llywelyn, last of the line to rule in Gwynedd,[2] was slain in the wars against Edward Plantagenet. It is also certain that he extended considerably the boundaries of Gwynedd and became a powerful king, as kings were accounted in those days, and, what is more to his credit, did not permit war to prevent him from encouraging the arts of peace, for he was the friend and patron of bards and poetry.

There is an interesting legend connected with this Maelgwn which reminds one of the happenings connected with the later story of Cnut. It appears that, despite the evil things which Gildas has to say of him, Maelgwn was, as we have suggested, a vigorous, if unscrupulous, tribal chief. At first his energies were devoted to bringing the other tribes which lay to the south of his territory under his rule. After some struggles, the exact nature of which is unknown to us, tradition informs us that the various chiefs assembled at Aberdovey. There they were to decide who should be king of Britain. The lot, it was determined, should fall upon the one who could defy

[1] The conflict between bard and monk was continuous in Wales throughout the mediaeval period.

[2] David, of course, was not put to death by Edward until October 1283, but he can hardly be regarded as having reigned.

the tide longest. In passing we may remark that owing to the extremely gradual slope of the sands at Aberdovey the tide rises there very slowly indeed. Maelgwn was fortunate in having as an ally one Maeldav, an enchanter, who fashioned for him a chair which could ride on the water. Upon this Maelgwn sat. The result, of course, is obvious. While his opponents were forced by the rising tide to retire, Maelgwn rode proudly on his magic chair. He was chosen king, and apparently united the western parts of Britain, bringing them all under his sway. The exact extent of his kingdom we cannot even guess at, although it not improbably included Cumbria. We do not know whether he ever led his troops against the Saxons, though of a certainty it was the eastern part of what was once his kingdom that was ravaged after the disastrous defeat at Deorham in 577. Maelgwn himself did not die on the battlefield ; he fell a victim to the yellow plague in 547. This Maelgwn was, as we have said, one of the reputed kings of Britain, whose title of Wledig was probably based on some sort of claim to be the successor of the Roman *Dux Britanniarum.*

### Weakness of the Welsh Tribal System

With regard to these ancient kings it is necessary to observe that it is improbable that the territories over which they ruled were wide. Britain had from very early times been ruled by many kings. No permanent attempt at centralization of government seems ever to have been made by the Brythons at any period of their occupation of England or Wales. Occasionally a leader of greater power or wider view rises up and links together the scattered tribes into something of a kingdom, but for the most part these kings were, it would seem, mere tribal leaders. The reason for this we can only guess at in the present state of our knowledge of these early centuries. It is now fairly well established, thanks largely to the researches of Seebohm,[1] that the Cymry had a highly developed system of tribal holding of land, a land system based,

[1] And also, perhaps we should add, to the late Hubert Lewis.

as regards the Cymry, though possibly not extending to the strangers within their borders, almost entirely on kinship, on membership of a tribe or family—a land system under which the family estates remained in the tribe for generations, the descendants of a particular stock taking the place of their particular ancestors, until after so many generations a final division seems to have taken place, each of the persons to whom the various parts were given apparently establishing a new tribe, separate, as regards land-holding, from the rest. This matter we shall have to consider at greater length in a subsequent chapter. We mention it here in order to point out that such a system, which existed in Ireland in a similar form and with a similar effect, cuts right across any possible system of centralization. Nothing shows the statesmanship of William I more clearly than the gemot of Salisbury, where he required all the tenants-in-chief of land in England to swear fealty to him as the one supreme overlord of all for their land. William had learnt his lesson in France. He had seen how the turbulent barons of the Continent (he himself was one of the most conspicuous examples) could defy their nominal chief, could wage war in his realm and, if need be, against him, and that with success. He determined that this evil system should never be planted in England by him. He found, however, that the seed was already there, yes, and truly that the custom of centuries had developed it into a strong and noxious plant. The gemot of Salisbury plucked it out for ever as regards England. Henceforth in England there was one king, one overlord, one person and one person only to whom all tenants of land (in those days particularly the birthplace of all political power) owed allegiance. With Britain, and in later times with Cymru, it was otherwise. Men had overlords, but they were petty tribal chiefs. These petty chiefs, it may be, were bound by weak ties, we believe very weak ties, to a higher or more important chief, but there would appear to have been no general system whereby these chiefs held their land from one general overlord, or indeed from any overlord. They would seem to have claimed their

holding, ultimately, as being descended from a landowning tribe, not as being the grantees of an overlord who had given them land in return for services, and for so long, and for so long only, as those services were rendered. In saying this we must not be understood to be supporting the now exploded theory that feudalism came in with the Conqueror. It was fairly developed in England doubtless some time before the Conquest. We are now speaking, not of Saxon England, but of Britain and of Cymru.

This point should be grasped most carefully. We hold the view that no man can understand the most ordinary events of history without some knowledge of the everyday life, the circumstances of existence of the everyday man (the 'man in the street,' so to say), who when all is said and done is the person who forms the machine which the master minds control and move. It is useless to blame the Cymric chiefs for failing to join their forces under one chief who could lead them to battle against their numerous enemies with some hope of success when the root reason for this failure to coalesce is to be found, not in the absence of statecraft on the part of the leaders, but in the circumstances of the life of their followers, which of necessity split up interests into a thousand parts and made each little family tribe foreign in interest to the tribes which bordered on its own small holding. Exactly the same sort of evil division of national might into a myriad of small conflicting groups is to be seen in England in the Middle Ages in the world of commerce. Each little town bound by the ties of guild and borough community was as foreign to the neighbouring towns as Danzig is to Bath. Community of interest was lacking; town fought against town; charters were framed to beat down commercial dealing with the next town though it were but a league distant. The result was disastrous. For proof, look round the cities of England which are to-day thriving and prosperous. They are in numberless cases free towns which grew up in later times unencumbered by this vicious system of petty rivalry. It was, we believe, the same in Britain. All through this history,

with a few important and honourable exceptions, we shall find no general attempt to gather all the available forces under one strong leader. Even when one would have thought all parties and all tribes should have joined to meet a common enemy we shall find either no combination or a weak one based on treaty interest, which, like all such, breaks down at the critical stage by a crafty opponent weaning away with bright promises one or more of the more easily bribed confederates.

### Arthur

One of the kings of Britain who made some sort of successful attempt to consolidate the native forces against the Continental invaders was Arthur, if legend speaks truly. Even he, however, never ruled over all Britain, though his realm, which was in the west, seems to have been of considerable extent. Whether this same Arthur is a legendary character or was a real king is not by any means free from doubt. Caxton seems to have had some doubts on the matter, for in his preface to Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* we find him writing: "Divers men hold opinion that there was no such Arthur, and that all such books as been made of him be feigned and fables, because that some chronicles make of him no mention, nor remember him nothing, nor of his knights. Whereto they answered, and one in special said, that in him that should say or think that there never was such a king called Arthur might well be aretted great folly and blindness. For he said that there were many evidences of the contrary. First ye may see his sepulchre in the monastery of Glastonbury. And also in *Policronicon,* in the fifth book the sixth chapter, and in the seventh book the twenty-third chapter, where his body was buried, and after found, and translated into the said monastery. Ye shall see also in the history of Bochas, in his book *De Casu Principum,* part of his noble acts, and also of his fall. Also Galfridus in his British book recounteth his life: and in divers places of England many remembrances be yet of him, and shall remain perpetually, and also of his knights. First in the Abbey of

Westminster at St. Edward's shrine, remaineth the print of his seal in red wax closed in beryl, in which is written, *Patricius Arthurus Britannie, Gallie, Germanie, Dacie, Imperator. Item* in the Castle of Dover ye may see Gawaine's skull and Cradok's mantle: at Winchester the Round Table: in other places Launcelot's sword and many other things. . . . And yet of record remain in witness of him in Wales, in the town of Camelot, the great stones and the marvellous works of iron lying under the ground, and royal vaults, which divers now living have seen. Wherefore it is a marvel why he is no more renowned in his own country, save only it accordeth to the Word of God, which saith that no man is accepted for a prophet in his own country."

It would certainly be marvellous if a king who had extended his sway over Gaul and Germany as well as England and Wales, and that in the sixth century, should have been regarded as of so little importance by his countryman and contemporary Gildas that he failed even to mention his name. It is clearly no answer to say that Gildas was a native of Strathclyde, and not of Wales or Cornwall. The deeds ascribed to Arthur by Wace, Walter Map, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Thomas Malory, had they been true even to the tenth part, would have carried the name of Arthur far beyond the bounds of Strathclyde, would have been seized upon by a far less discerning writer than Gildas, and would have formed a bright interlude in his "tearful discourse concerning the ruin of Britain," as Bede described his history.[1] Indeed, it were waste of space even to suggest that the Arthur of the Arthurian legends ever lived. It does not follow, however, that there was no such king, nor can we say that he did not accomplish some considerable deeds of valour and statecraft. Nennius, writing at the end of the eighth century, mentions him and ascribes twelve victories over the Saxons to his hero. The phrases in

[1] Giraldus tells us, in explanation of the fact that Gildas does not mention his contemporary Arthur, that he, Gildas, angry at the death of his brother, prince of Albania (whom Arthur slew), threw into the sea "many excellent books, in which he had described the actions of Arthur." There is, of course, no ground whatever for this statement.

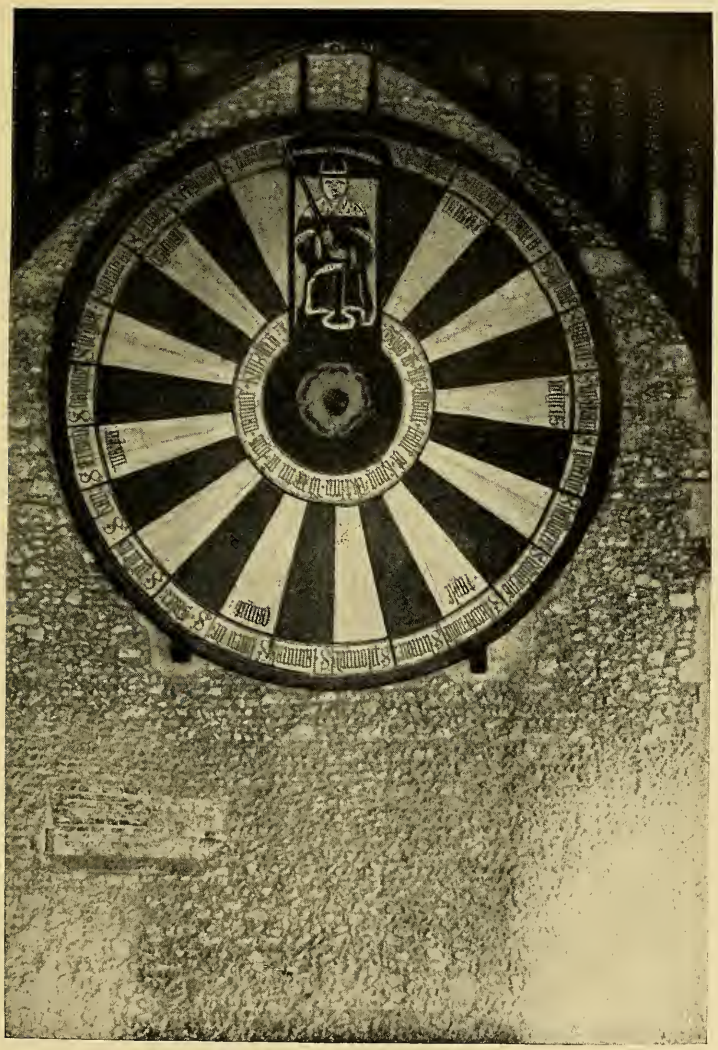


PLATE XXIV. THE ROUND TABLE AT WINCHESTER HALL
*Photo G. W. Wilson & Co.*

which he relates these victories do not ring true. We suspect that there was but little true history underlying them. In one of them (also found in the *Annales Cambriae*) Arthur goes into battle bearing the image of the Virgin Mary on his shoulders; the pagans thereupon flee, and suffer a great slaughter. One's thoughts instinctively turn to the battle of Chester, fought against these same pagans, where the Britons went into battle led by more than a thousand holy men, who had fasted so that their prayers might win victory for their side, and one remembers that the result of that act of piety was the massacre of the monks and the complete victory of the pagans. No one who bears in mind Cromwell's battle of Dunbar would deny to piety a victory-winning force, but Nennius carries little conviction to us when he tells us of the pagans fleeing at the mere sight of an image—of the significance of which they could not have had the remotest knowledge. Then, again, in the account of the battle of Mount Badon we find that Arthur himself and unaided is accredited with the slaughter of nine hundred and sixty men! Romance! The *Annales Cambriae*, a still later compilation, contains as one of its first entries, under date 516, an account of this Mount Badon battle, in which Arthur is described as the victorious leader of the Britons, and we have a poem celebrating the victory. We also find him mentioned, in conjunction with one Medrant, in the same chronicle under date 537. It is significant that he is not referred to in the *Brut y Tywysogion* (*The Chronicle of the Princes*). Giraldus Cambrensis, a much later writer, has, however, something to say of him. How it was that the name of Arthur lived on in the song of poet, Welsh, English, and French, and in the later historio-romances of such men as Geoffrey of Monmouth and Giraldus we shall see when we come to consider the Arthurian legends.

In this state of our knowledge we will merely express the hope that Arthur was a leader of the Britons on the borders of Wales, having his seat at Caerleon-upon-Usk; improving the morals of his knights (there is ample historical evidence to show that these same Britons had learnt much evil as well as

good from the Romans); endeavouring to unite his followers by giving to each equally with himself a seeming equality; and finally leading this noble and united band against the barbarian Cynric. One thing at least is sure. Cynric's reign is marked by a comparative absence of battles against the Britons. Somebody or something must have checked the invader about the time that Arthur is supposed to have lived.

### Votepori

The name of another South Wales prince or leader also flits before us. This was that king whose name appears as Voteporigis in the Latin and Votecorigis in the Goidelic tongue. Of him we know but little save his name. Gildas refers to him and makes him tyrant of Dyfed. He appears under the name Guotepir as the ancestor, or perhaps we should say the precursor,[1] of Arthur. If we believe Gildas we must regard him as one of the men who were responsible for the loss of Britain. He is painted as the vile son of a good father, whose name was Aricol or Agricola. That he actually lived is certain, for a monument "In memory of the protector Votepori" was discovered in 1895 in about the centre of what must have been his kingdom of Dyfed. Whether we are to hold him guilty of the sins which Gildas would have us associate with his name is very doubtful. The use of the word 'protector' would seem to show that his subjects regarded him as not unworthy of a title which in past years was held by the Roman generals who held the country against the barbarians. Writers have suggested that this title of protector in the case of Votepori meant simply that he was an honorary member of the emperor's bodyguard. Perhaps Mr. Nicholson is more correct when he gives it its more natural meaning, viz. that Votepori was regarded as the protector of his people. Whether he protected them against the Goidels

[1] See Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson's article in *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. xxi, where he brings forward some convincing arguments to show that the so-called Harleian Genealogies are not, in some cases at any rate, genealogies, but merely tables of succession. The line in the table we quote from at present runs Guotepir—Cuicar—Petr—Arthur, etc.

of South Wales or of Ireland, or the Scots, or the Saxons, or sea-rovers, it is impossible to say.

To sum up, we may perhaps regard Votepori as a king of Dyfed somewhat earlier in date than Arthur, who made a mark upon his time as a leader of his people. We may, perhaps, acquit him of the sins of which Gildas accuses him, even as we look lightly upon the reputed crimes of that other king Cinglas of the genealogies (that Cuneglasus for whom Gildas has so many hard words), who was of the age of Maelgwn, and who probably did nothing more wicked than object to his brothers' generous gifts to the Church, and, maybe, contract an irregular marriage.

### Gildas the Reformer

Before passing on to an account of the later kings of ancient Cymry it is desirable to say something of this Gildas whose name we have so frequently mentioned. In one sense he is the only living man of the sixth century in Britain. Although a monk rather than a man of action, yet, through his writings, this cleric is known to us far better than are those warriors whose lives must have been spent in fighting, in the protection of the people, or in the extension of their power.

This man of the Clyde was born in the year in which Arthur is supposed to have fought and won the battle of Mount Badon. He therefore belongs in point of time to the commencement of the sixth century. He was evidently admirably educated, and possessed a considerable knowledge of the classics and a command of Latin (although, unfortunately, he has an unhappy style) so great as to be immeasurably superior to the later author of the *Historia Brittonum*. In short, he was a schoolman, a classic, and a diligent student of the Bible. As to his religion, he was a Christian, and, unlike Bede, came of Christian stock and belonged to a Christian people. He refers to the ancient pagan worship as belonging to the far-away past. For him the old-time worship of trees and streams had no meaning. He was in all things a member of the British Church—indeed, a bigoted and narrow-minded

monk. In nationality, though, perhaps, by birth either a Goidel or a Briton, he was in sentiment entirely Roman It is easy to see that his heart was well-nigh breaking at the thought that Roman learning and all the glories of that wonderful Empire were slipping away and that his countrymen were falling back into a relative barbarity. With this noble sorrow we cannot but sympathize, but it is a matter for regret that his continual lamentations and invective have robbed his work of much of its value as a history. That he had cause to inveigh against the wickedness of his age is probable. The age has not yet been in which one fired with religious zeal could not justly account his kind vile. As to Britain of the early sixth century, it is probable that it was in urgent need of a religious revival. This at least Gildas accomplished, so effectively, indeed, that the evening of his day was spent in directing the religious movement which his earlier writings had inspired. It was to this later movement that St. David belongs.

### The Struggle with Bernicia

While this religious movement was progressing in eastern Britain a movement of a very different kind was advancing from the west and north. The kingdom of Bernicia, founded by Ide about the middle of the sixth century, was by the beginning of the seventh century an important state threatening the very existence of the Cymry of both Strathclyde and Gwynedd, and ruled over by that Aethelfrith whom Bede describes as a very Saul for plundering his enemies, a leader who made more Britons slaves and drove more of the ancient inhabitants from their lands than any other Saxon king. Perhaps Professor Lloyd is correct when he suggests that it was the pressure which the rising power of Bernicia brought to bear upon the Britons of the west that created the term Cymry. The Briton and the Goidel cast aside race distinction in the face of a common foe and united as ' countrymen ' to make a combined resistance.

It was perhaps to the earlier years of this struggle that

Urien ap Cynfach, mentioned in the Saxon Genealogies,[1] belongs. There we find him described as the greatest leader of the Britons; we find him besieging his enemies in Lindisfarne and carrying out an important campaign, the final success of which was only prevented by the treachery of one Morcant or Morgan, who planned and effected the death of his chief. The name Urien lived on, of course, in many a Welsh story, and it would seem that here we have a notable British chieftain of the north who spent his life resisting the inroads of the invaders. To about the same time, or perhaps earlier, belongs that Rhydderch who was credited with a great British victory at Arderydd, near Carlisle, in 575. His doings are, however, but little known to us, and we must pass him by and turn to a consideration of that other leader, Rhun or Run, who appears in the Harleian Genealogies as the successor of Mailcun or Maelgwn Gwynedd.

### Rhun

In the laws of Howel Dha we find a reference to this Rhun, who is there also given as the son of Maelgwn. It appears that he was either the established or the usurping prince of Arvon. (The doubt exists since he is believed by some to have been illegitimate.) Arvon was that part of Carnarvon which lies between Bangor and Celynwg. It appears that a certain Elidge the Courteous came to Arvon from the north and was slain. He appears to have been a man of importance, so that we find 'the men of the north' coming southward to avenge his death. In this they were apparently successful, destroying Arvon with fire. Then it was that Rhun assembled the men of Gwynedd in arms, and proceeded after the northerners, who not improbably were retiring to their homes, as far as the river Gweryd (Wear ?). Having got so far, the leaders appear to have had a fierce discussion as to who was entitled to precedence in passing over the river. The whole campaign seems to have been so protracted that it caused murmurings on the part of the soldiers, who, we gather, had

[1] Nennius, § 63.

good cause to want to get back to their homes. However this may be, we find Rhun granting the men of Arvon, ostensibly as a reward for the trials of this campaign, but possibly in order to strengthen his grip on the throne, fourteen privileges. In later times Cadwallawn found it desirable to extend similar rights to the men of Powys. These grants were unimportant in nature, so that one example must suffice. Thus we read that the men of Arvon were never to be required to drink 'stinted' measure—that is to say, to drink a small amount measured with the finger.

### Cadvan

We have but little knowledge of the kings who reigned over Gwynedd or any part of Wales between the time of Rhun and Cadvan. From the Harleian Genealogies it appears that the successor of Rhun was Beli, and that after Beli his son, Iago, ruled. Of Cadvan we know a little more. This king, the father of Caedwalla, or more correctly Cadwallawn, died *c.* 617. He was descended from Cunedda. He appears to have taken a leading part in the wars against the Northumbrians, which terminated so fatally in the battle of Chester. It has been conjectured that an inscription, *Catamanus rex sapientisimus opinatisimus omnium regum*, found on a stone above a door in the church of Llangadwaladr, in Anglesey, refers to him. If this be so, it is probable that the centre of the royal power of Gwynedd had already been removed from Deganwy to Aberffraw—which remained the princely house until the final overthrow of the Welsh princes.

### Cadwallawn

Cadvan is, however, chiefly known to history as the father of the more famous Cadwallawn, who apparently commenced to reign over Gwynedd in 617. This Cadwallawn inherited his father's enmity for the Northumbrians. Aethelfrith had earned the bitter hatred of the Venedotians [1] by his victory at Chester, and Cadwallawn seems to have set himself the task

[1] An alternative name for the men of North Wales, or Venedote.

of wiping out this defeat and re-establishing the old connexion with his fellow-countrymen of Strathclyde. We read of him invading Northumbria in 629, where, however, he suffered defeat at the hands of Eadwine, Aethelfrith's successor. This battle, which probably took place near Morpeth, resulted in the Welsh king being driven back to Venedotia. According to the *Annales Cambriae*, we find, under date 629, a certain Catguollaun, who may be identified with Cadwallawn, besieged in the island of Glannauc. It has been suggested that this was the island of Priestholm, near Anglesey. We may perhaps infer from this that the Northumbrians had replied to Cadwallawn's bold move by carrying the war into his own country. However this may be, we find him escaping to Ireland. He appears to have used his time of exile in thinking out a scheme by means of which he could recover his lost fortunes and finally overthrow his hereditary enemies. The decision he came to is certainly surprising. One would have thought that the last ally with whom a Christian king would identify himself would have been Penda the Mercian, who was regarded by his people as the champion of paganism against Christianity. Nevertheless Cadwallawn in fact did determine to join himself as ally with Penda[1] in order to work the final overthrow of the Northumbrians. In 633 the Mercian and the Venedotian invaded Northumbria and defeated and slew Eadwine at the battle of Hatfield Chase (Heathfield). Penda does not appear to have followed up his victory, but Cadwallawn, with the slaughter of Chester and his own defeats in his mind, ravaged southern Northumbria. In this devastation of Deira he seems to have shown the greatest ferocity. Not only did he put to death man, woman, and child, but he put them to death by torture. In 634 we find him defeating and killing Osric, cousin to Eadwine, and Eanfrith, son of Aethelfrith. It seemed, indeed, as though Chester and the Irish exile were being amply repaid. With the accession to power of Oswald the tables were again turned. At the battle of Oswald's Cross (Heavenfield), near Hexham, after certain pious exercises,

[1] One genealogy makes him Penda's brother-in-law.

the Northumbrians attacked and completely defeated the British king. Cadwallawn himself fled, was pursued, and slain on the banks of a small stream near Dilston, east of Hexham.

### Cadwaladr

Cadwallawn left a kingdom shattered by this great defeat. His successor was Cadwaladr Vendigaid (the Blessed). Details relating to his reign are almost non-existent. He possibly joined Penda as ally, as his father had done, in which case he is somewhat ill-named, for the leader of the British forces which were undoubtedly allied to Penda played a singularly ignoble part, basely deserting with the whole of his followers the night before the battle of Winwaed, and thus contributing in no small degree to the defeat and death of the aged pagan fighter Penda of Mercia. For this piece of treachery that British leader (whoever he may be, and the dates tally with Cadwaladr's reign) earned the base title of ' the king who ran away.' [1]

This battle of Winwaed has been regarded by some as the most important battle that was ever fought in pre-Norman England. Its site has been tentatively identified by J. Travis Mills as the place where " the Ermine Street crossed, and still crosses, the river Went near the modern Standing Flats Bridge, some two miles to the south of Pontefract." The importance of the struggle lies in the fact that it decided finally that the Britons were not to be henceforth the ruling race in England.[2]

As to Cadwaladr, if he were not ' the king who ran away ' (and since we cannot prove it we must acquit him of that charge), we know singularly little of him. Even the place of his death is a matter of doubt, our two primary authorities, the *Annales Cambriae* and the *Chronicles of the Princes*, giving

[1] Lloyd states that it was Cadafael, mentioned in the *Triads* as one of the three peasant kings of Britain, who earned this title. *Cf.* Nennius, § 65.

[2] From the point of view of Saxon history it was immensely important in consequence of the fact that Christianity was established as the dominant religion.

very different accounts. According to later historio-romancers, after reigning twelve years he was driven from Britain by the plague and sought refuge in Armorica, from whence he later returned to fight against the Saxons. Although showing the greatest personal bravery, he seems to have been fighting a losing battle, and we therefore find him retiring to Rome. Probably this last fact comes from the *Chronicles of the Princes*, which commences with the words: "Six hundred and eighty-one was the year of Christ when the great mortality took place through the whole island of Britain. And from the beginning of the world until that period one year was wanting of five thousand eight hundred and eighty years. And in that year Cadwaladr the Blessed, son of Cadwallawn, son of Cadvan, king of the Britons, died at Rome, on the twelfth day of May; as Myrddin [Merlin] had previously prophesied to Vortigern of Repulsive Lips; and thenceforth the Britons lost the crown of the kingdom, and the Saxons gained it."

If we turn, however, to the *Annales* we find a less fulsome, but probably more accurate, account of Cadwaladr's death. Under date 682 we read: "There was a great sickness in Britain, in which Catgualart, son of Catguollaun, perished." And under date 683 we read that the same plague devastated Hibernia. So probably Cadwaladr died of the plague in his own country of Venedote.[1]

The entry in the *Chronicles of the Princes* is, however, significant in one respect. With the death of Cadwaladr the kings of Britain end. In future they are but princes.

[1] Cadwaladr seems to have been a good son of the Church. Many churches claim him as their patron saint or founder, notably Llangadwaladr, in Môn. Professor Lloyd, relying on the Saxon Genealogies (Nennius, § 64), places his death in 664, the year when the plague raged with much violence. See Lloyd, *History of Wales*, vol. i, p. 230 *n*. See also p. 139, *post*.

# CHAPTER VII

## THE SOCIAL CONDITION OF PRE-NORMAN WALES[1]

THIS is a convenient time in which to break in upon the current of our account of the development of the history of the Cymry in order to explain the social and domestic condition of Wales in the times anterior to the coming of the Normans. The period of which we are now treating may be roughly described as that which elapsed between the departure of the Romans and the commencement of the struggle with the Norman marchers. Our authorities are to some extent Saxon authorities, dealing with Saxon times and Saxon people. When we are relying on them we shall be careful only to choose those portions of their writings which reflection has persuaded us are applicable to the Cymry.

The Britons, as we have already remarked, had been brought into intimate connexion for many centuries with the civilization of Rome. Compared with the Jutes, Angles, Saxons, and Danes who later invaded Britain, they were a polished and enlightened people. They were acquainted with Latin and Greek, and had in their possession many of the classics written in those tongues. They had inherited from the Romans an advanced knowledge of domestic architecture, and of the arts and sciences which were known to the Romans. They cannot but have been acquainted with Roman law. They had learned the methods of Roman traders, and they

[1] Lest the reader should regard us as guilty of an anachronism in placing this account, which depends for its facts upon tenth- to fourteenth-century works, so early in this book, it is desirable to point out that there are no grounds for believing that the social state of Wales altered materially between the time of Howel and Giraldus.

had seen the value of Roman roads and the methods adopted by the Romans to secure peace by an extended system of fortified camps and strong, well-planned towns. They had lived for centuries under a system of land-holding which we may describe as the Roman villa system. They had been for many centuries a Christian people, acquainted with the various doctrines relating to that most wonderful religion. Yet it would seem that they retained many of their more ancient customs, and infused even into their religion forms and peculiarities which were alien to the more finished Italian system.

### Welsh Form of Land-tenure

We will first consider the Welsh mode of land-tenure, since the whole structure of society does, as a rule, ultimately depend upon the land. The unit of holding with the Welsh was the *wele* or *gwely*. The method by which this unit was held and descended was somewhat as follows : Each Cymro—that is to say, each Briton who was regarded as a tribesman or compatriot, as distinct from a domiciled stranger or foreigner —was of necessity a member of a tribe. This tribe had in all cases a certain tribal holding of land—the *gwely*. This unit, this tribal holding, remained in the tribe, and the tribe looked back as far as the great-grandfather of the final holders ; that is to say, the family group owning a common ancestor remained as one group, occupying the family land in joint ownership, until the stage was reached at which the holders of the land were the great-grandchildren of the common ancestor On the great-grandfather's death there was an equal division of the land to his sons ; after the death of his sons to his grandsons ; after the death of his grandsons to his great-grandsons. All this time the *gwely* would be referred to as the *gwely* of A, the common ancestor. This stage having been reached, there would seem to have been a dividing up of the *gwely* among the great-grandsons, though it would not appear that there were as many new groups or *gwelys* formed as there were great-grandsons. Possibly the new *gwelys* were counted, not from

the great-grandsons, but from the grandsons, though this is not clear.

We see, therefore, that during the stages between the commencement and redivision of a *gwely* the various holders of the family lands held jointly as kinsmen tracing their descent from a common ancestor. This, of course, explains the importance which is attached to genealogies in all the Welsh chronicles and land-books. All title depended upon birth, and an excellent proof of birth was to be found in these same genealogies, though it could be proved otherwise, especially by means of the hearthstone.

Every tribesman on coming of age had given to him a portion of land to cultivate for his maintenance (*cyvarwys*), and the right to till jointly with others the waste or common land and the right to hunt. These gifts were not made to him by his father—for his father had not individual ownership; it was made to him by the tribe, speaking probably through the tribal chief. It is, indeed, perhaps hardly correct to speak of it as a gift; it was rather his by right, by right of kin and descent. Until the young tribesman reached the age of fourteen he was maintained by his father in his father's home. When that age was reached he was removed to his chief's establishment, became his chief's 'man,' and looked to his chief for maintenance. He had also at the same time a gift of cattle (*da*) made to him by the chief. In later times this *da* included other personal property besides cattle. On his death without sons this gift reverted to his lord; if he had sons it seems probable that, at least by the tenth century, the sons inherited. It will be understood that this gift, though it came directly from the chief, came indirectly from the tribe, for the chief was custodian of the undivided communal property —he merely distributed the common stock. It will be observed that as soon as the child emerged from infancy he passed completely out of parental control. He became the son of the tribe rather than of his father. This is strongly brought out when we consider the rules relating to *galanas*, or blood-money. Every one familiar with the Anglo-Saxon dooms will

remember the remarkable provisions which assign to every offence from murder downward an appropriate fine payable as a punishment by the offender or by those who had guaranteed in advance his good behaviour. These fines are also found in the Welsh laws, and are known as *galanas*. Now if a son committed murder his father's kin paid two-thirds and his mother's kin paid one-third of the appropriate *galana* (it varied with the importance of the murdered person) to the kin of the victim. We find, however, both in the *Venedotian* and *Dimetian Code* that the *father* of the murderer paid nothing and the *father* of the victim received one penny only, " since his son is no relative to him." Again, we find in a fifteenth-century treatise the following remarkable statement : " Can a father complain for the killing of his son ? He cannot : he is not within the grades of affinity."

So far as to the land within the *gwely*. This land could not, of course, be alienated by the holder ; it had of necessity to remain in the family ; it was, so to speak, entailed to the use of the kin, and it passed on death in a manner similar, in some respects, to gavelkind land, common in Kent. It is a holding similar to the old Irish system of land-holding. There was, however, another system of owning property, land as well as chattels. Individual ownership of both was possible. Such individual ownership should be kept distinct from the holding within the *gwely* or tribe. This ' personal ' property could be alienated (with the consent of the heir), sold, given away, settled as a dowry, etc. ; it could be held by ' strangers,' who could have no part in tribal property.

Again, on marriage it was customary with the Welsh for the wife to have a dowry. It seems to have been the universal custom for the Welsh maid to have some property to take to her husband. This property, as in the Roman and the modern civil law systems, either passed to the husband or was ' declared ' as belonging to the wife. This, in our opinion, is a heritage from Rome. The principle is well known to-day in South Africa, Ceylon (Roman-Dutch law), Quebec (Civil law), and Scotland, as well as upon the Continent. If the property was

declared or defined at the time of the marriage it became the wife's; she was a 'proprietrix,' and could contract debts and bind herself in respect of it—a state of things which has existed in England at law (as distinguished from equity) only since 1882.[1] Such separate property passed to the children of the marriage on the death of the wife.

This system of land-holding lived on until the time of Henry VIII, being expressly preserved by the Statute of Rhuddlan, which permitted an alternative holding either in the Welsh or English manner. It will be remarked that primogeniture had no part at any time in the Welsh system. Even the individually owned land probably went on death to the sons equally—in default of sons, it went to the daughters equally.

There is another peculiarity found in the Welsh system which to us looks like Roman law. As Seebohm has pointed out, the *gwely* resembled the group under *patria potestas*—one of the most peculiarly Roman domestic arrangements, whereby all agnatic relations were under the control of their oldest common paternal ancestor living. He had absolute power in early times (we are speaking of Rome at the period of the Twelve Tables, *c.* 452 B.C.) over their bodies and their property. Now under the Roman system daughters were also under *patria potestas* until they married; on marriage they passed to the family of their husband, and were under the same control as their husband was. Under the Welsh system the descendants of daughters were not included in the *gwely*; they *were* included in the kindred if they had been married into it.

We desire here to clear up a doubt which may be in the mind of the more critical reader. To say that the Welsh laws are derived from the Roman law by way of the Roman occupation would be a bold proposition to make. It is necessary, therefore, to mention that our authority for the above-mentioned rules relating to Welsh law is derived in the main from the Welsh codes of Howel Dha—a tenth-century compilation which dates in manuscript form from the thirteenth

[1] Or in certain cases since 1870.

century. Howel had himself been in Rome; he and his councillors had before them, without doubt, the *Leges Barbarorum* or the Code of Charlemagne, both founded on the compilations of Justinian. It may be, therefore, that these rules got their Roman flavour in one or both of two ways: either because the Britons had engrafted Roman law and custom on to their own system during the Roman occupation or because of a too faithful copying of the Roman or barbarian codes by the scribes who at Howel's instigation compiled these Welsh laws. Which is the right alternative we are quite unable to determine. It appears to be a matter for individual opinion. Certain rules relating to easements are so well developed and so near the Roman model that they rather suggest copying. In one important matter, however, we find Howel refusing to follow the system of Italy. He expressly stated that the illegitimate son should be entitled to succeed on intestacy. Truly a most ancient rule, pointing back to the old system of a matriarchal state, where men traced their family through females.[1]

As we have said, no one but a countryman or compatriot could hold land within the *gwely*. The question thus arises:

[1] The Welsh rules relating to inheritance, birthright, fosterage, and the relationship between father and son have the most direct effect upon Welsh history. If there is one thing more than another which resulted in the weakness of the Principality, it is certainly the fact that on the death of a prince or chief his territory was divided up among all his sons. This was a weakness, tending as it did to decentralization. The system might have worked with tolerable success had brothers in Wales regarded one another as friends and near relatives. It is clear, however, that the bond between brothers was of the weakest description. Born possibly of different mothers, some legitimate, others, according to modern views, illegitimate, their sole tie was their common father. As soon as infancy was left behind they passed from their father's house or palace into the family of a foster-parent. This foster-parent always attempted to advance his own foster-children, so that foster-brothers were much nearer in interest and friendship than brothers were. On a prince's death, as has been said, his territory was divided among his sons. These sons would enter upon their inheritance as strangers to one another, having quite diverse interests and under the control, to some extent, of their foster-parents, who would probably in many cases seek to advance their own and their pupil's interest by setting brother against brother. That this peculiar system had an immense influence on Welsh history will, we believe, be evident to the reader when the later chapters of this book have been perused.

Was it possible for a stranger ever to become a Cymro? The answer, paradoxical though it may seem, is Yes and No! No stranger could by his own unaided effort become a Cymro, except by saving the life of a Cymro, or by avenging his death, or by waging combat for him. But, though an individual stranger could not become of the kin of a Cymric tribe, a stranger tribe could come to be regarded as a Cymric tribe—but only by a residence in Cymru for nine successive generations or by intermarriage with Cymraeses generation after generation for four generations. If a Cymraes married a stranger, her children were strangers and suffered the usual disabilities attaching to those who could not claim kinship with a Cymric tribe—viz. their evidence would not be admissible against a countryman, they would not be allowed to bear arms or to indulge in horsemanship or hunting, and they would be ineligible for the honourable professions of bard, scholar, or smith.

On the other hand, it was possible for a Cymro to lose his kinship. Thus a traitor to his kindred was declared a kin-broken man and was banished from Cymru. When such a sentence was decreed we are told that it was required of every one of either sex and every age within hearing of the horn to follow the exile and to keep up the barking of dogs to the time of his putting to sea, and until he should have passed three-score hours out of sight. Truly a form of procedure calculated to impress upon the traitor a sense of the utter detestation in which his one-time kindred now held him.

### Organization of the Tribe

As to the internal organization of the tribe, each tribe seems to have recognized three leaders: (1) the chief, who apparently represented the kin in the councils of the court and possibly acted as judge in the tribal court; (2) the avenger, who led the tribe in battle, and whose duty it was to punish wrong-doers; (3) the representative, who seems to have been the ambassador of the tribe in all dealings with foreign tribes or powers. We have a feeling, however, that this threefold

division of power owes itself rather to the Celtic love of groups of three and seven than to the fact that there were three such chiefs. Anyone acquainted with the Brehon law tracts will remember how frequently one finds forced triplets, as in the passage in the *Senchus Mor*: "There are three periods at which the world dies, the period of plague, of a general war, of the dissolution of verbal agreements." [1] These groups of three should not, we think, be too much relied upon. It is probable, however, that the chief who led the tribe in council was distinct from the chief who commanded in time of war. We are told that the former was the oldest efficient man in the kin to the ninth degree. It is evident that a more active leader would be required in wartime.

The outward sign of membership of a tribe was the tonsure. Perhaps the reader will remember that in the story of Kilhwch and Olwen, Kilhwch, when asked by Arthur what boon he would like, replied, "I would that thou bless my hair," whereupon Arthur took a golden comb and scissors. Doubtless Kilhwch's request was construed as a request to be admitted as one of Arthur's tribe—as, in fact, Arthur's man and kinsman.

We now pass from our outline treatment of the Welsh tribal system to a consideration of the daily life of the Welsh. Before doing so, however, it will be convenient to say something about the territorial, political, and social divisions which existed.

### Political Divisions

Wales itself, roughly speaking, was divided into three chief kingdoms, Gwynedd, Powys, Deheubarth. Each of these kingdoms (including Anglesey, or Môn, which was part of Gwynedd) was divided into so many honours, and each honour into cantrefs, the cantrefs being subdivided into commots or cymwds. Thus Gwynedd was divided into what we may term the honours (an inelegancy, since this is a term of art foreign to Cymru) Môn (Anglesey), Arvon, Meirionydd, and Y Berfeddwlad (Inner Country). Môn in turn was divided

[1] *Senchus Mor* (Rolls Series), vol. i, p. 51.

into the cantrefs of Aberffraw, Cemais, Rossyr. Aberffraw was bisected into the cymwds Lleyn and Malltraeth. The cymwd (cymmwd) was the unit of government. Each cymwd and cantref had an organization separate from those of its neighbours. It is probable that rulership of the cantref was given by the king or prince of Gwynedd, Powys, or Deheubarth, as the case might be, to some important tribal person, who thereupon became lord of the cantref. Sometimes we find several cantrefs under one man, who generally styles himself prince or king. Thus Merion, grandson of Cunedda, got as his share of the plunder of the Scots of North Wales the division of land which later became the honour or county of Meirionydd. In the normal case, however, it is probable that there was no intermediate between the chief of a cantref and the king or prince. This chief in turn appointed officers to carry out the executive duties of government in each cymwd. Thus we find in each cymwd certain persons such as the *maer* and *canghellor*, with definite duties. Each cymwd also had a court, presided over by a judge, probably chosen for his wisdom. Side by side with these political or governmental divisions it is necessary to remember that the tribal divisions existed. As in Rome, a son might have jurisdiction over his father in the public court of the cymwd, while his father was judge over him in the tribal court.

### Status

The divisions of status were even more numerous. In the first place it is necessary to distinguish between countrymen or tribesmen, domiciled or intermarried strangers who were on the way to being treated as tribesmen, and strangers. The stranger was not improbably regarded as little more than a serf or slave. As we have seen, he was not permitted to bear arms—a fact which, if it stood alone, would lead us to believe that the non-tribesmen, having no power to fight, had few rights to claim. Even after a residence in Cymru for four generations, although such strangers seem to have been recognized by the tribesmen and could hold land under the tribal chief, they were by no means in the same position as tribesmen. They

held land, it is true, and their holding was recognized by the tribal chief, but they seem to have been mere *nativi*, persons bound to the land they tilled—unable to leave save by the consent of their superior. Thus we may say that the division into tribesman and non-tribesman was equivalent to the division free and unfree. The unfree were subdivided into *taeogau*, who had certain legal rights—*e.g.* they could make binding contracts—and *caethion*, or pure slaves. These latter performed all the more menial offices.

The tribesmen were divided into classes : the royal class ; the noble class, or *uchelwyr* ; the commoners, or *boneddigion*. Within the classes all were equal, save that, as we have seen, the eldest in the tribe had pre-eminence, and, further, that the avenger and the representative had certain special rights and duties.

Side by side with these main divisions there also existed, of course, the various grades of professions and employments. We may perhaps gather from the order of precedence recognized among the king's household in what respect and honour the various professions were held. Thus in the *Venedotian Code* we find the king's court formed of the following officers, arranged in the following order :

(*a*) The Chief of the Household.
(*b*) The Priest of the Household.
(*c*) The Steward.
(*d*) The Chief Falconer.
(*e*) The Judge of the Court.
(*f*) The Chief Groom.
(*g*) The Page of the Chamber.
(*h*) The Bard of the Household.
(*i*) The Silentiary.
(*j*) The Chief Huntsman.
(*k*) The Mead-brewer.
(*l*) The Mediciner.
(*m*) The Butler.
(*n*) The Doorward.
(*o*) The Cook.
(*p*) The Candle-bearer.

This list does not mention the Smith of the Court, who was an important person. It may be that the above is not the strict order of precedence. We have an account of the position at table which the courtiers had to occupy, but the order is a little difficult to follow in consequence of the peculiar arrangement of the tables and screens in the royal palace. We may, however, say that of the chief professions the following was the order: (1) high executive officers; (2) the priest; (3) the judge; (4) the bard; (5) the smith; (6) the mediciner. Of course there was no distinction between soldier and civilian, because all were soldiers. Each of these various persons had what we may term an 'insult value,' or *saraad*, as well as a life price (his 'worth'). Thus if anyone snatched anything out of a queen's hand it was necessary to pay her *saraad*: The king's *saraad* was rather extraordinary and deserves mention. It consisted of a hundred cows for each cantref; a white bull with red ears for every hundred cows; a rod of gold equal in length to himself and as thick as his little finger; and a plate of gold as broad as his face and as thick as the nail of a ploughman who has been a ploughman for seven years. The *saraad* of the Chief of the Household was a third of the king's (except the gold); the priest's was an amount to be decided by the synod; the steward's nine kine and nine score of silver; the others down to the silentiary, six kine and six score of silver.

### The Bard

We have seen that one of the important officers of the king's court was the bard. The bards occupy a very singular position in ancient Cymru. We read in Diodorus Siculus that among the Gauls (a similar race to the Cymry of Wales) there were composers of verses called bards. These sang to instruments similar to lyres. Strabo refers to the bards as being singers and poets, and they are mentioned by many of the ancient historians. Probably, indeed almost certainly, the bards were connected with the Druids. Their duties consisted in singing for the amusement or elevation of their patrons, and

in recording by means of verses, so designed and so arranged in cadences that they were easily committed to memory, national events desirable to be known. They also had the recording of marriages and the drafting of genealogies committed to their charge. They formed, according to the *Triads*, one of the three sacred classes whose members were inviolable. The harp was one of the three things privileged from distress.

The court seems to have had two bards in attendance, the Chaired Bard and the Bard of the Household. In the sixteenth-century *Triads* we find the bardic office arranged in the usual threefold division. First was the Primitive Bard, whose right to be regarded as a bard appears to have depended upon his being the follower or disciple of a recognized teacher. It was this, the lowest class of bard, which had entrusted to it the duty of recording " every memorial of art and sciences so far as they might be in its department . . . and likewise every memorial and record of country and kindred, in respect to marriages, and kins, and arms, and territorial divisions, and the privileges of the country and kindred of the Cymry." The second class were the Ovates, who seem to have been graduates in bardism approved by a session or congress of bards. They had not to show discipleship to another bard. They seem to have been the teachers of the arts and sciences. The last and highest class were the Druid bards. These seem also to have been teachers, philosophers, and leaders of religion. Too much reliance should not, however, be placed upon information contained in the *Triads*, for it is a sixteenth-century forgery purporting to describe the customs of the sixth century. It also suffers from its artificial construction—everything being grouped into threes, which manifestly could not have been the case in fact. It is therefore a relief to turn to the laws of Howel Dha, which at least do not attempt to sail under false colours, for our further information relating to the bards.

Howel's laws were, as is perhaps known to the reader, drawn up with the aid of a committee selected from the Archbishop of Menevia, other bishops and the chief of the clergy, the nobles of Wales, and six persons from each cymwd,

who all met at the Y Ty Gwyn ar Dav, or the White House on the river Taff, which was near the site of Whitland Abbey in Caermarthenshire. The White House derived its name from the white rods of which it was constructed. It was a hunting lodge belonging to Howel. From the above-mentioned persons Howel selected twelve, and added as secretary, Blegywryd, Archdeacon of Llandaff, and brother to Morgan, king of Glamorgan, and to Geraint the Blue Bard, who was a poet and grammarian of importance. In the Iolo manuscripts we find the following description of Geraint: "The oldest system on record of memorials and recollections is that of Geraint the Blue Bard upon poetic metres, and of all that is extant from before his time there is nothing remaining except what may be discerned by the learned by means of books. This Geraint was brother of Morgan the Aged, King of Glamorgan, and he collected ancient records of poetry and bardism, and arranged them in a book of his own composition, and established them by the laws of the chair and Gorsedd in every country and dominion in Wales; and Geraint excelled in knowledge and judgment, and every chair in Wales and England was given to him, from which he was called the Blue Bard of the Chair. After this he became domestic bard to Alfred, King of England, and he remained with him, giving instructions to the Cymry in England, and to the Saxons; and in Winchester he lies buried." He has been tentatively identified with Asser. It will be remembered that Asser completed his account of Alfred's reign in 888 (at least his account ends with that year). The laws of Howel were completed in their original form not later than 914, probably some few years earlier. Asser died in 908, according to the *Annales Cambriae*. Possibly the true date is 910.

With such bards directly or indirectly concerned in its production, one might expect to find some details concerning bardism in the laws themselves, and in this expectation one is not disappointed. We read that the Bard of the Household had as special privileges his land free, his horse in attendance and his linen from the queen, his woollen clothing coming

from the king. He sat next to the chief of the household at the three principal feasts, and it was the chief of the household who placed the harp in the bard's hands when he was required to sing. When songs were desired, the chaired bard had to begin singing, first a religious piece, and secondly a song in honour of the king. After the chaired bard came the bard of the household, who sang songs on various subjects. One of the special privileges of the chief of the household was that he could require the bard to sing to him at any time. We find a delightful touch when we read that " If the Queen desire a song, let the bard of the household go to sing to her without limitation, *but in a low voice*, so that the hall may not be disturbed by him." [1] Another duty of the bard was to celebrate a victory in song, singing, as the victors shared the spoil, the song called " The Monarchy of Britain " (*Unbenaeth Prydain*). His duties were, of course, quite different from those of the jester, who was much lower in the social scale.

### Welsh Druidism

As we have said, intimately connected with the bards were the Druids, who, if we follow Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, are to be distinguished from the soothsayers. It will, of course, be remembered that the Druids and their religion had long since been superseded by Christianity. According to Suetonius, in the early days of the Roman occupation Claudius had forbidden the performance of the Druidical rites under severe penalties. As far as Wales is concerned Druidism had become at most a secret and fugitive religion by the end of the first century A.D. In Caledonia it lasted on, apparently, until about the time of Severus—that is to say, till some time early in the third century.

With the passing of the Druids there appears to have been no lessening in the extraordinary veneration in which those leaders of religious, philosophical, and scientific thought had

[1] He was also directed to sing to her the song of Camlan, *i.e.* Camelot. If this was because Camelot was the result of a woman's infidelity, and if this part of the laws was really of the tenth century, it has an important bearing upon the origin of the Arthurian legend.

been held by the commonalty. Henceforth, however, it was the priests of the new order who were looked up to ; and they, in conjunction with the bards, were the upholders of the torch of learning in the dark ages of Welsh history.

We believe that many of the old Druidical practices and much of the old sun-worship lasted on long after the introduction of the Christian religion. Such an event as the interposition of the monks of Bangor between the opposing forces at Chester reminds one strongly of Druidic custom. Then, again, what is one to think when one reads in 1912 of a young man being fined in South Wales by the magistrates for stopping a bridal procession by stretching a piece of rope across the road and demanding tribute ? His substantial defence was that it was an ancient custom—similar, indeed, to the Hoke Day practices. Now it has been suggested quite recently,[1] and the suggestion is supported by a certain amount of evidence, that this custom and the Hoke Day festival itself go back right to the time of the Druids ; right to the period when the sun-worshippers were raising the circle at Stonehenge—far past the time when Caesar landed in these islands. The rope stretched across the road represents the cord with which the sacrificial victim was caught and bound. The sacrifice itself and the watch to keep off evil spirits are also represented in modern observances. These ceremonies took place in the spring, and were not improbably sacrificial religious rites connected with the blessing of the forthcoming seed-time. We gather from Giraldus Cambrensis that the Welsh ploughed for oats in March and April, and for wheat in summer and winter. Since Hoke Day falls on the second Tuesday after Easter, it will be seen that it agrees roughly with the Welsh seed-time. Of course the fixing of the date from Easter (*Pasg*) argues against a pagan origin, but it is by no means clear that the early British Christians did not take over, so to say, the old pagan festivals and days of fasting. It would even be difficult at this distance of time and in the state of our authorities to

[1] See the article by Dr. Bellot in *Law Quarterly Review*, 1912.

deny definitely that the conflict between the British Church and St. Augustine regarding the fixing of Easter may not have arisen out of the fact that the British day was based on pagan calculations.

However this may be, the new religion appears to have become quite early firmly fixed among the Britons.[1] By the tenth century we find the Welsh monks, then, of course, the leaders of the ancient British Church and still the opponents of the Christianity planted in England by Augustine, presiding over colleges at Llanrillied and at Cattwg at which Saxon gentlemen went to receive the polish apparently unobtainable at that time (A.D. 959) in England. The result of this opening of the doors to the Saxon nobility was unfortunate for the monks, for we find Owain, son of Howel Dha, demolishing these colleges on account of the extension of their fellowship to Saxons.

We have already mentioned the monastery at Bangor-on-Dee—a monastery containing more than two thousand monks at the time of the battle of Chester, a monastery which acted as a centre of learning, eradiating knowledge not only to the eastern part of this island, but also to Ireland. By the eighth century at latest monasteries had been established at Basingwerk and Coleshill, and Menevia was the centre of St. David's activities even in the sixth century.

## Everyday Life of the Cymry

In considering the everyday life of the Cymry of the period of the kings, we will take the case of an average man who was neither a priest nor bard, smith, carpenter, or mediciner. Such a man would, as a rule, be engaged in agricultural pursuits, having as his sports—if a freeman—war, horsemanship, and hunting. If but a youth he was taught farming, especially dairy-farming, and weaving. On coming of age he was given, as we have seen, land which he cultivated for himself. The system of land cultivation was not dissimilar to

[1] Certainly not later than the fourth century, and possibly as early as the second century.

the English manorial system, save that the grouping of the cottages was in Wales always in hamlets. All the mere labourer's work, whether on the land or at the lord's corn-mill, was done by persons who were unfree, the domestic and menial duties being performed by slaves.

The farm labourers, though unfree, were not absolutely without rights. Being unfree, they could not, of course, have any share in the tribal lands. It would seem, however, that, in return for their services, the lord protected them from oppression and allotted to them a certain amount of land (worked on the strip or common field system), from which they raised the vegetables and food-stuffs with which to make such payments in kind as their lord might demand either in exchange for or in addition to direct service. Thus in later times we find villeins working at their lord's mill and doing carriage service besides paying rent (about 2*s*. 6*d*. a year) for their holdings. They were, however, relieved from the payment of reliefs and *amobr* (maiden-fee). With regard to the payments in kind, the laws of Howel mention the following: sheep, lambs, kids, hens, cheese, butter, milk, hay, straw, fuel. In the later extents we read of six tenements rendering jointly three sheep, six lambs, nine hens, butter, one hundred eggs. The value was fixed at 5*s*.

The distribution of the manorial estate would be somewhat as follows: In the centre would be found the mansion and home farm, and surrounding these, not improbably, the tribal lands inhabited by freemen. Outside, perhaps miles away, would lie the hamlets of the villeins.

The villeins were called to work by the porter or horn-blower. They ploughed with oxen, according to Giraldus, and, as we have already stated, ploughing was done in March and April for oats and in summer and winter for wheat, thus pointing to a double harvest. As in Scotland and the Isle of Man, the ploughman walked backward when ploughing. These farm labourers worked under the supervision of a land-maer Oats formed the chief crop, though a large variety of cereals and field produce was not improbably known to the Welsh.

In a most interesting work dating from the tenth century, and dealing primarily with the everyday life, habits, diseases, food-stuffs, and cures common among the *Saxons*, we find a vast number of food-stuffs and drinks mentioned. We believe that the standard of living was much the same in Wales at a similar period and in times of comparative peace. Since this work throws some extremely interesting sidelights on the everyday life of the people of those times we purpose to make some mention of it.

We are told that at banquets gleemen were generally in attendance to render songs appropriate to the occasion. At great feasts the dishes were of silver and the drinking-vessels were of glass. Glass had, of course, been manufactured in England long before the departure of the Romans, and the site of one of the most important factories has been discovered not far from the border of North Wales. These glass vessels were sometimes transparent, sometimes opaque. Salt was largely used, being brought from Cheshire and Worcestershire, where there were brine evaporation furnaces. The drinks used at that time were beer, ale, double brewed ale (containing malt and sometimes hops), mead (a sweet intoxicating drink), wines, and certain others of a special kind—*e.g.* hydromel, and 'the southern acid drink' called oxymel, made from vinegar, honey, and water, and regarded as a cure for the 'half-dead' disease and epilepsy. The fruits grown were sweet apples, pears, peaches, medlars, plums, and cherries. Several of these, without doubt, had been introduced by the Romans—sweet apples, for example.[1]

Drawing of a Plough in Llanstephen MS. 116

As to the food-stuffs, it would be wearisome to recount all the various delicacies open to the gourmet of A.D. 1000. We will content ourselves with mentioning that the Cymry were

[1] As to ordinary trees, we find mentioned the oak, beech, birch, hawthorn, sloe-thorn, elm, maple, holly, and walnut. The last-mentioned was an imported tree; the others were probably indigenous.

acquainted with oyster patties and they stuffed their fowls with bread and parsley. It is interesting to note that invalids had special dietaries allowed them. Thus we find the following mentioned as suitable for a sick man: chickens, giblets, pigs' trotters, eggs, broth, milk dishes, junkets. We also have preserved to us the daily allowance of a boy while being educated at a monastery. This youth was comparatively poor, since we are told that he drank ale or water because he could not afford wine. Among eatables he had the following choice: herbs, fish, cheese, butter, beans, and flesh meats. Doubtless we should add bread.[1]

### Domestic Architecture

As to the domestic appointments, Seebohm, working, doubtless, on the authority of Howel's laws and Giraldus Cambrensis, has described the Welsh house as follows: "The tribal house was built of trees newly cut from the forest. A long straight pole is selected for the roof-tree. Six well-grown trees with suitable branches, apparently reaching over to meet one another, and of about the same size as the roof-tree, are stuck upright in the ground at even distances in two parallel rows, three in each row. Their extremities bending over make a Gothic arch, and crossing one another at the top each pair makes a fork, upon which the roof-tree is fixed. These trees supporting the roof-tree are called *gavaels* [? *gavl*], forks, or columns, and they form the nave of the tribal house. Then, at some distance back from these rows of columns or forks, low walls of stakes and wattle shut in the aisles of the house, and over all is the roof of branches and rough thatch, while at the aisles behind the pillars are placed beds of rushes, called *gwelyau* (*lecti*), on which the inmates sleep. The foot-boards of the beds between the columns form their seats in the daytime. The fire is lighted on an open hearth in the centre of the nave between the two middle columns."

If this be an accurate description of an average Welsh tribal

[1] The Welsh did not, however, eat much bread. Their diet consisted mainly of meat and milk and milk products.

FACSIMILE OF F. 49 b MS. COTTON, VITELL. Ciii (BRIT. MUS.)
DESCRIBING EARLY SAXON CURES

house, then we must confess that the Britons carried with them in their flight to Wales very little of the knowledge relating to domestic architecture which they must have possessed in some degree after so many centuries of Roman rule. That this description is correct we have no reason to doubt. Indeed, even the better sort of houses would seem to have been fashioned in similar manner. The reader will probably remember that the White House at which Howel's laws were compiled was a king's hunting-box built of white wattles. It is odd if the early Welsh were less cultivated and luxurious than the Saxons, yet the Saxons had feather beds, with bolsters and pillows.[1]

Small houses were not even as elaborate as the rude construction mentioned above. They were simple wattle and wood buildings, circular in shape, with the fireplace in the centre and beds of rushes all around. The occupants slept as soldiers do to-day in tents—with their feet to the centre. Such buildings were probably inhabited by the *taeogau*.

### Cures and Cunning

As we have already seen, medicine was a special profession. The mediciners were not improbably acquainted with the Greek and Roman authorities on surgery and physic. That the Saxons were possessed of such knowledge is certain, and it is almost inconceivable that the Britons should not have been. Most of the remedies we read of were herbal. Surgery seems to have been in its infancy. Some of the cures are based on charms or magic. Thus we find that the following was regarded as a cure for a fever: "Take the right foot shank of a black dead hound, hang it on the arm; it shaketh off the fever." We have also an interesting charm given for catching a swarm of bees. The method was as follows:

"Take some earth, throw it with thy right hand under thy right foot and say, 'I take under foot, I am trying what earth

[1] Columba, writing to Rhydderch in the sixth century, foretold that he would die in bed "on his couch of feathers."

avails for everything in the world, and against spite and against malice, and against the mickle tongue of man, and against displeasure.' Throw over them some gravel where they swarm and say :

" ' Sit ye, my ladies, sink,
Sink ye to earth down ;
Never be so wild
As to the wood to fly.
Be ye as mindful of my good as every man is of meat and estate.' "

A great number of these cures reflect the immense amount of superstitions which were current throughout Britain in those ages. Since our authority is not Cymric, it would be undesirable to do more than merely mention the kind of fears that seem to have harassed the people. We find a recipe for a drink " against a devil and dementedness," and we have a cure in a case where the patient has been overlooked by the evil eye. Elf-sickness in one form or another seems to have been very common, and dreams and nightmares were the subjects of much study. In such a state of society it is perhaps superfluous to add that the love-philtre and its converse, the knot, were commonly sought after.

We find an interesting cure for ' doing away a dwarf.' Thus we read : " To do away a dwarf, give to the troubled man to eat thōst of a white hound pounded to dust and mingled with meal and baked to a cake ere the hour of the dwarf's arrival, whether by day or by night it be ; his access is terribly strong, and after that it diminisheth and departeth away."

### Valuations

In the laws of Howel Dha we have reference to a vast number of articles used by the people of those times, the reason being that with the Welsh everything had an appropriate price or value, so that if a thing were injured or if the household goods had to be divided—*e.g.* between husband and wife on separation—the exact value of each thing was known. The *Venedotian Code* alone gives a list of more than two hundred and fifty articles whose value had been appraised. It is therefore obvious that we cannot give an account of these

PLATE XXVI. CELTIC CROSS IN LLANBADARN FAWR CHURCHYARD

chattels in detail. Most of the things are either clothing, articles of the chase, furniture, or instruments of husbandry, agriculture, carpentry, or smithcraft. The harp and its tuning-key are very prominent. The harp was evidently regarded as of great value, a king's harp being priced at six score pence, while a willow pail was only worth one penny. An iron spade was likewise worth one penny; a chicken was valued at one farthing. One of the most valuable things was the buffalo horn out of which certain highly placed persons were permitted to drink. These buffalo horns were valued at a pound, or the value of a hundred and twenty battle-axes or sixty gilded spurs. Plaids, pillows, and cauldrons were also set high in the list of values, a pillow, probably of feathers, being priced at exactly the same amount as a weaver's loom, viz. at twenty-four pence.

Many of the things which appear in this list were much later in date than Howel's time, and are probably later than the modifications introduced by Bleddyn in or about 1080. Perhaps we may trace them to David, son of Owain Gwynedd. Whatever may be their exact date, such articles as hauberks and basnets look like Norman innovations. It is of some interest to note that the Welsh had not lost their ancient art of enamelling, for we find an ordinary shield valued at eight pence, but if it were enamelled blue or gold this value increased to twenty-four pence.

Clothes were, as prices went in those days, rather expensive. A shirt and trousers were valued at twenty-four pence, and a royal robe at one pound, a noble's robe being priced somewhat less. No one else seems to have been allowed to wear a robe, but mantles were fairly common, any one who could afford the twenty-four pence necessary to pay for it being allowed to wear one. Caps were extraordinarily expensive, for a cap cost as much as a mantle. A bonnet, on the other hand, cost but one legal penny. Truly the times have altered!

Besides chattels, other things had a price set upon them. Thus every part of the human body was duly valued, so that in case of injury the person wronged should know exactly how

much to claim from the wrongdoer. A typical Welsh touch (for Welshmen were always great talkers) is found in the value assigned to the tongue, for we read that "The worth of the tongue itself is equal to the worth of all the other members, because it defends itself."

From what we have already said it will be evident to the reader that the ancient laws of Wales contain some very curious and interesting rules. With the legal aspect of these laws we have not been concerned in this present chapter. In the chapter following, however, we shall consider some of the more important laws and customs of the Welsh.

# CHAPTER VIII

## WELSH LAWS AND CUSTOMS

IN the previous chapter we touched on certain parts of the Welsh laws which referred more particularly to the social condition of the Welsh. We propose now to consider in rather more detail such parts of these codes as may be of interest to the general reader.

Although these laws are reputed to have been compiled by Howel Dha, the form in which we have them contains additions by subsequent princes. Thus Bleddyn, Prince of Powys, made extensive changes in the *Venedotian Code* toward the end of the eleventh century. We know, for instance, that he altered the amounts of land assigned to the persons entitled on the various divisions among heirs. He also remodelled the rules relating to the restitution to be made by a thief, requiring full satisfaction instead of the fines obtaining in the time of Howel.

Gruffydd ap Cynan, a still later Prince of Gwynedd, also made some changes reforming the rules regulating bards and minstrels. His son, not improbably, made still further additions.

Again, about the same time we find Rhys, Prince of Deheubarth, while making certain changes in the Welsh laws, falling into line with Henry II's judicial system. Owain Gwynedd carried the pro-Norman movement still farther. Welsh law continued, however, to be the law applicable in Wales until the time of Edward I. The Statute of Rhuddlan was then passed, which, while preserving certain Welsh characteristics, in effect brought Wales within the English system. Some of these peculiarities linger even yet, but most of them were abolished by the Welshman Henry VIII.

We must now turn back and remind the reader that we are concerned with Wales of the tenth century or earlier. The first group of laws with which we propose to deal are the rules relating to women.

One of the things which strike one most forcibly when reading this part of the Welsh codes is, on the one hand, the fairness of the laws to women, and, on the other, the laxness of morals. The times were, of course, rough and rude, and the Welsh were certainly no worse as regards morals than the Norse. But it strikes one as strange to pass from a rubric full of good sense, good law, and enlightenment to a rule so coarse in intent and phrasing that a learned editor and translator of the codes found it desirable to clothe such passages in the Latin tongue

## The Position of Women

As we have said, the attitude of the Welsh to their womenkind was extremely fair. Perhaps this may have been due to a remembrance of the old matriarchal state, which Sir John Rhys thinks may have existed in very early times. However this may be, we find girls and boys and women and men equally treated, in the main. Until the young Cymraes was twelve years of age she was maintained by her father even as children are to-day. When she had attained that age she was deemed a woman, and her position was very different. She then became entitled to her share in the personal property of the kin. Her father was no longer bound to maintain her. As the Welsh laws put it, "Every woman is to go the way she willeth, freely, for she is not to be revenant; and nothing is due from her except her maiden-fee."

This mention of the maiden-fee refers to a fine which was payable to the chief man whenever a Cymraes became a woman in the fuller sense either by marriage or otherwise. So free was the young Cymraes that, having attained the age of twelve, she was free to give herself in marriage, in which case she had to pay the maiden-fee. In the normal case doubtless the father maintained his daughters for years after they

attained supposed womanhood, and until marriage, in which case, if he gave his daughter away, he was liable to pay the maiden-fee.

We have no very full account of the Welsh marriage. There seems to have been a difference between an 'espoused wife' and a 'wife.' Reading between the lines it would appear that the formal way to marry was by plight of faith together with a church ceremony. But any action showing intention to live together was sufficient to warrant the title 'wife.' The central fact was the taking home of the woman by the man—the *deductio in domum* of the Romans—together with cohabitation. Whether they practised the pretty customs with garlands and roses which the Romans used we do not know.

The same freedom which was the woman's before marriage continued afterward. She could leave her husband at any time. He could leave her at any time. Subsequent marriage operated as a divorce.

On a woman marrying she took certain property to her husband as dower. This dower was to be hers "unto the end of the seventh year, and if there be three nights wanting of the seventh year and they separate, let them share into two portions everything belonging to them."

The rules relating to the sharing of the property are given very fully in the *Venedotian Code* (which we are at present relying upon). The law stated with great particularity what things were to go to the husband and what to the wife. Where the law did not apply the husband had first choice, but apart from that they shared equally.

If they had sheep and goats the husband was given the sheep, the wife the goats. This was unfair to the wife, of course. The children were divided up in a similar manner—not into sheep and goats, but according to numbers and ages. The husband took two out of three. He had the oldest and the youngest. The wife took the middlemost. To the wife went all the milking-vessels except one pail, all the dishes except one dish; the car and yoke to convey her furniture from the house. She also took the lower stone of the quern,

the husband having the upper stone. She had the bedclothes over them, he the bedclothes under them, but if he married again these went to his earlier wife, unless he cared to pay a fine. The wife also took the pan, trivet, broad axe, hedge-bill, ploughshare, all the flax, the linseed, the wool, the money-bag with its copper contents (gold and silver were divided). The food-stuffs were divided. Of personal clothes they kept their own except mantles, which were to be shared. In another part of the Welsh laws we find a delightful distinction made between a "town-made *mantle*" and "every home-made *covering*." The mantles were, as we have seen, regarded as valuable. As to the debts, each had to pay them in equal shares.

To mention the various things allocated to the husband would be to draw out the list to a tedious length. Appropriately enough he was to take all the drinking-vessels. He also took all the corn, all the poultry, and one of the cats. The cat held a very special place in the Welsh household.[1] When we turn to the Welsh law of sale we find a special warranty, in the case of the sale of the cat, against any propensity to caterwauling. The cat was regarded as quite a valuable animal, and a number appear to have been kept in every Welsh household.

On separation before the seventh year the wife also received back her dower (three pounds in the normal case), her paraphernalia, and her *cowyll* (one pound in the case of the ordinary person), and all presents made to her before marriage. If the wife left her husband without good reason she could only claim her *cowyll*, but if her husband subsequently married, he had to pay her a sum of money. If the wife was, while yet living with her husband, guilty of lightness, even of covertly kissing another man, her husband could repudiate her and she forfeited all her property rights. A woman could leave her husband and still claim her property in full for three causes

[1] This, we suspect, comes from their Semitic ancestors. The cat was, of course, sacred in Egypt, and mummified cats may be seen in the British Museum.

only. Two we will pass over, the third, leprosy, reminds us of the ravages which that dreaded disease made throughout England and Wales in those times. We have many memorials of the extent of its hold. The leper-holes [1] in many old churches speak of it. The frequent mention of the disabilities of lepers to contract tell of it, and of the banishment of these unhappy folk from the haunts of men. It is to the honour of women that we can say that examples are known of women following their husbands into their dreadful retreats when hopeless victims of this scourge, rather than forsake them, as, by law, they were entitled to do.

On the death of the husband we read that the wife was " to have everything in two portions " except the corn. This she had only if an ' espoused ' wife. We understand by an ' espoused ' wife one who was married in a formal way. Whenever a woman and a man lived together she obtained certain rights. If the cohabitation was of any duration she came to be looked upon as a wife. It may be remembered that the Romans made a similar distinction between *materfamilias* and *uxor*, though probably this has no connexion with the Welsh division.

The husband could not defeat his wife's right of succession by leaving his property away from her. He could, however, bequeath the mortuary fees,[2] and the fine payable to his lord, and money to pay all his debts.

The *Venedotian Code* contains an interesting rule stating the three things for which a man might beat his wife. We will spare the reader mention of the first two. The third reason was giving anything away which she might not give. This introduces a long list of things which she might donate. The wife of a *taeog*, or villein, could give but few things. The laws only mention her headgear and the sieve. The sieve is frequently mentioned in the Welsh laws. It was one of the things specially given to the wife on separation, the

[1] It has been doubted whether many so-called leper-holes had anything to do with lepers. At least one Saxon bishop was a leper.

[2] For church rites, blessings, prayers, etc.

husband taking the riddle. The *taeog's* wife could only lend the sieve "as far as her voice can be heard . . . requesting its return." The wife of a *uchelwr*, or chief, could, however, give away quite a number of things, and could lend all the furniture without legally being liable to be beaten.

Before we pass from the law relating to women we must remind the reader that the woman with separate property of her own could buy and sell and make herself liable for her debts. If she were married she could not sell without the consent of her husband unless she was possessed of separate property. This, we take it, refers to the dower. The dower normally went to the husband and wife as goods in common, so to say. The giver of the dower could, however, as we have seen, declare a separation of goods at the time of marriage, in which case we assume that the separated property would be deemed the wife's.

There were elaborate rules relating to fines payable if a woman were insulted or disgraced. The fine was generally regulated according to the position of her husband, if she had one, otherwise according to that of her eldest brother.

### Ancient Laws of Wales

We hesitate to go into any detail with regard to legal rules and observances. Law is a dull subject to the general reader. Moreover, it is hopeless in the space at our disposal to make clear many legal rules to anyone unacquainted with the subject. We propose, however, to touch on one or two points which throw into prominence certain peculiarities of the average Welshman of that age.

Everything could be paid for in money. That is the outstanding fact in early Welsh and Saxon law. From murder downward everything had its appropriate fine price, varying with the injury and the status of the injured.

### Law relating to Contract

As regards the law relating to contract, the only part which has any living interest for the non-legal reader is that which

contains the rules relating to buying and selling. Here again well-nigh everything had its appropriate price fixed. The part of the code now to be referred to is posterior to the time of Howel, but for our present purpose that is hardly material. We find in the *Dimetian Code* the price of a stallion fixed at one pound, a palfrey at a mark, a rouncy at 120 pence, a sumpter-horse at 80 pence, a draught mare at one cow, a brood mare at 120 pence. With these various values attached to horses it is interesting to compare the various mounts placed upon them by Chaucer in his Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. Thus, upon the palfrey rode that monk who was described as

> An outridere that lovede venerie;
> A manly man, to been an abbot able.

On the other hand, a rouncy was good enough for the shipman, while upon a mare, as a thing of less worth, rode the plowman.

Nearly every kind of movable was appraised. We find the price fixed for cows, oxen, calves, swine, sheep, goats, cats, fowls, dogs, hawks, bees, harts (whose value was that of an ox, a hind's value being that of a 'fair' cow), furs and skins, wood and trees, branches of trees, furniture, articles of husbandry, boots, clothing, saddlery, etc. These fixed prices are sometimes expressed as being the fine prices payable if the thing is injured or destroyed, and sometimes as the sale prices.

Sales in those days were much more complicated affairs than they are to-day. They had to be held in specified places and before witnesses. If credit were given it was customary and necessary to give a surety or a pledge. On the sale of an animal the seller was treated as having warranted or guaranteed it against the diseases most common to that type of animal. Thus in the *Dimetian Code* we read: "Whoever shall sell a horse is to insure its *dilysrwydd* [title] until death; and against the staggers, for three dew-falls; against the strangles, for three moons; against the farcy

[or glanders], a year; and, in addition, he is to insure it against any inward disorder." If these diseases or faults appeared within the limited time mentioned the horse could be returned. On the other hand, if certain other defects appeared—*e.g.* if the horse turned out to be a restive animal—the seller had to return a third of the price to the buyer, but the buyer had to keep the horse, and could not return it and demand the whole of his money back.

As we have seen, a cat had to be warranted free from a propensity to caterwauling. Swine were to be warranted against devouring their young. In all cases, if fraud were shown the bargain was off and the person misled could recover his money.

We shall later have occasion to refer to the Irish slave traffic. Women and children were most commonly dealt in at these sales. As M. Stocquart has pointed out, the sale of wives in very early times was one of the most important kinds of traffic. It is probable that the women sold in Ireland were often bought as wives rather than as slaves. The people depended on captives taken in war for their slaves; purchase would be an unnecessarily expensive way of getting them. The trade was not, of course, limited to Ireland. In the earliest Anglo-Saxon doom (early seventh century) there is an interesting passage which shows that the custom was common in England. It runs: "If a man buy a maiden with diseased cattle, let the bargain stand if it be without guile, but if there be guile let him bring her home again and let his property be restored to him." This must, in our opinion, refer to wife-purchase and not to slave-buying. If the latter, the cynical modern mind regards such a doom as putting a premium on diseased cattle and guile!

### Procedure

In early societies we find almost universally a considerable amount of attention paid to the mode of obtaining obedience to law. Compared with the amount of substantive law, or law which has to be obeyed, the amount of adjective law, or

law relating to the means which must be taken to secure obedience, is to-day quite small. In tenth-century Wales and England it was about half the total law.

It must always be remembered that in those days we had not to deal with one 'peace,' the 'King's Peace,' extending throughout the country. The number of jurisdictions was almost unlimited. Even as at the time of the French Revolution many nobles in France retained the old seigneurial rights of trying and hanging without being responsible to anyone, so in earlier times private jurisdictions extended throughout England and Wales. In very early times we believe that the tribal chief had jurisdiction over the tribe. When the social arrangements of the community were more advanced, so that we had the dual organization of tribe and embryonic state, with a chief at the head of the latter, it is probable that both tribe and state would have courts. Within times of which we know the history we have indirect references to courts of the tribe and to the lord's court.

The centre of the system which was established to enforce the carrying out of contracts and the paying of debts—that is to say, law on the civil side—was the 'lord' or chieftain. At each transaction witnesses or contract-men were present, and if credit was given sureties were demanded. These sureties were men who were pledged to see that the debtor paid. The contract-men acted as arbitrators in case of a dispute; or, if arbitration failed, as witnesses if the action went to trial.

Arbitration was, of course, extremely common in the early Middle Ages both in England and Wales. At a later date special days were set aside for the amicable settlement of disputes. These days, called *dies amoris*, or love-days, are frequently referred to by both Langland and Chaucer.[1] In later times the arbitrator was generally a priest, and it was this fact which eventually accounted for the decline of the system, the priests of later mediaeval England being notoriously ignorant and bribable. Even in *Piers Plowman* we find

[1] The practice was very much earlier than Langland.

Langland speaking of the priest-arbitrator in no very glowing terms. Thus he makes his priest say :

> I can hold lovedayes and here a reve's rekenynge,
> And in cannon or in decretals I cannot read a line.

Arbitration was possibly even more common in Wales than in England, and was evidently a practice of great antiquity.

If arbitration came to nothing, and the debtor failed to pay, then the surety had to bring him before the court, and the contract-men had to be prepared to give evidence of what they heard and saw. An account of what took place in court would, we fear, prove dull to the general reader. It consisted in the main of affirmatory oaths on the one hand, and acknowledgment, or oaths in denial, on the other. These oaths were taken on a haligdom with the Saxons—that is to say, some holy thing, generally a Bible. With the Welsh it was the same : some holy relic, generally a Bible, would be used, or on serious and solemn occasions possibly the bones of a saint.[1]

As we have said, the duty of a surety was to bring the debtor to justice. If the debtor failed to pay, the surety was liable and had to pay, or give a pledge, unless the debtor denied his surety. The form of denial or acknowledgment is given in vivid phraseology in the Welsh codes, so that we feel justified in reproducing the translation of Aneurin Owen. It runs as follows :

" If he [the debtor] willeth to deny, a surety is to be thus denied : let the two parties, and the surety, come before the judge ; and the judge is to seek from both parties an acknowledgment whether ' Yonder man be a surety, or not a surety ? ' ' A surety, God knows,' says the creditor : ' Not a surety, God knows,' says the debtor. Then it is right for the judge to ask the surety : ' Art thou a surety ? ' ' I am,' replies the surety. ' It is wholly denied,' says the debtor : ' thou art not surety for me ; neither for that [the debt in question], nor

[1] Giraldus tells us that they held many things, such as portable bells, staves crooked at the top and covered with gold, silver, or brass, and similar relics of the saints, in more veneration than the Gospels.

for anything.' 'God knows,' says the surety, 'in the best manner a surety is to insist that he is a surety, do I insist on my being surety.' 'God knows,' says the debtor, 'in the best manner a debtor is to deny surety, I will deny it.' Then it is right for the judge to ascertain in what manner he is to deny it. Now the law in this case provides, since there is only his own evidence in the matter prosecuting it, there is to be only the evidence of the debtor to deny it. 'Yes,' says the debtor, 'I will deny him.' Then it is right for the judge to take the relic in his hand, and say to the debtor: 'The protection of God prevent thee! and the protection of the Pope of Rome! and the protection of thy lord! do not take a false oath.'"

This swearing on a relic was regarded as a very awful test. In Alfred's dooms we have words which suggest that a man might prefer to go to the triple ordeal rather than risk a false oath on a haligdom.

If the debtor in the above-mentioned case persisted and swore on the relic and the surety did not, the debtor was free. If the surety counter-swore on the relic the debtor had to bring forward seven compurgators to swear to his innocence. The denial of the oath had to take place in church between the *Benedicamus* and the distributing of sacramental bread. If the debtor were proved unable to clear himself he had to pay the claim and was liable to be charged with perjury.

The surety, as we have said, had to obtain satisfaction for the creditor. One way of so doing was to get the debtor before the court so that the creditor could get judgment. Another way was to give the creditor a pledge belonging to the debtor. Thus, supposing the debtor owed twelve pence, the surety and the creditor called at his house and required payment. If it were not forthcoming they seized some property which was worth about twelve pence, and retained it unless the debt was paid. If it were left too long unpaid the creditor could realize. A difficulty, however, arose if the debtor had nothing about the value which was seizable. Thus we read in the Welsh laws that the debtor might be able

to say, " I have not wherewith to pay you, except my horse ; and that I will neither give to you nor pledge." In that case we are informed " the surety is not to take the pledge from him ; and the creditor is not to take the pledge of the surety : but both parties are to proceed to the lord, and declare to him : ' There is yonder only a great matter : and a great matter is not to be taken in pledge for a small matter.' " The lord was then empowered to give the necessary authority for the seizing of the horse.

We find that the Welsh never permitted agency. As we have seen, a woman could contract ; so could a *taeog* to a limited extent, but there were three things which he could not sell without his lord's permission—a stallion, honey, and swine—just as there were three professions or arts which he might not learn save with his lord's consent—scholarship, smithcraft, and bardism. It was obviously desirable to prevent the villeins learning the art of the smithy, since it was the smiths who made all the armour [1] and weapons of war. The exclusion from learning is also understandable. It is always desirable to keep in ignorance those whom you desire to repress.

We can find no reference in the Welsh laws to the quaint rule in the *Cain Lanamhna* (Ireland) that a wife could set aside her husband's foolish bargains, but we do find mention made of the similar rule (also found in the *Cain Lanamhna*) that a son could set aside such contracts.

### Law relating to Crime

Of the early criminal law of Wales we propose to say very little. All forms of crime could be paid for. Murder, or its equivalent, was a term used to describe the killing of a tribesman or countryman. To kill a stranger was in early times regarded as rather meritorious—unless the said stranger happened to be somebody else's slave, in which case compensation had to be made as though the slayer had broken a chair or any other possession belonging to a countryman.

In the case of the murder of a tribesman or countryman in

[1] The Welsh never wore much armour.

early times in Wales we have no doubt that the blood-feud was common. The murdered man's family commenced a war of extermination on the family of the murderer, who, of course, retaliated. The *lex talionis* must have resulted in an immense number of deaths, so that it must soon have been decided to substitute some other system for the blood-feud. The pressure of outside enemies, of hostile tribes, must have made such internecine strife quite intolerable. We therefore find quite early the substitution of blood-money for the blood-feud. This murder-price was called by the Welsh *galanas*, and was generally three times the *saraad*, or insult price. The *galanas* varied enormously according to the status of the person murdered, from the king, whose *galanas* was treble his *saraad* (see p. 110), to a *pencenedl* (the head of a family), whose life-price was 189 cows, to a commoner, who was valued at sixty-three cows, and finally to a *caeth* (or slave) "of the island," whose life-price was but four cows. A woman's *galanas* was half that of a man, so that a female slave could be murdered for the price of two cows!

The *galanas* had to be paid, of course, by the kin of the murderer. Failure to pay even to the last penny resulted in the murderer's life being forfeited. The method of collection deserves mention. The murderer, accompanied by a servant of the lord of the district, set out in search of relatives, taking with him some holy relic. Whenever he met a person not known to be related to him within the seventh degree he demanded of him whether he was descended from any of the four kindreds from which he (the murderer) was descended. The stranger had to answer on oath, swearing on the relic. If he took an oath in denial he was exempt. If he admitted relationship, no oath was necessary, of course—he simply had to contribute his share of the life-price.

If a man slew an immediate kinsman the position was rather different. No *galanas* appears to have been payable, but the murderer forfeited his kinship. He became kin-wrecked—an outcast from his tribe. He was driven to the sea with the accompaniment of angry cries and the barking of

dogs. There he was put on board ship, and his one-time kinsmen wrathfully watched him until he was completely out of sight, and for many hours afterward, lest he should return.

### The Rules relating to Fire

There is but one other branch of the law which we propose to mention. The Welsh rules relating to fire (*tan*) are sufficiently curious to be worth describing.

As Giraldus tells us, the Welsh were great fire-users. They were in the habit of keeping their hearth fires burning both night and day, and, as he says, if in the course of the night the occupants of the house found it chilly they left their hard couches—often the ground—and stirred the dying embers into a generous blaze. When we remember that the Welsh house was in almost all cases made of wood thatched with straw it can readily be understood that their lawgivers were forced to make rules which would guard against the wholesale burning of villages and towns. We find, indeed, that this question of fire is very fully dealt with in the codes. Fire itself is always treated as a tangible thing of a dangerous nature which, in the modern English law phrase, must be kept in at the possessor's peril.

In view of this objective treatment of fire it is not surprising that we read of people lending and borrowing it, stealing it, carrying it away, and having it given! If a person gave fire away and it did damage the donor was liable to the extent of one-third in certain cases, but if the fire were lent the lender was not liable, apparently. If a person burnt his house and that house burnt another, and so on, each householder appears to have been liable to the next householder, but no farther.[1]

Apart from uncontrollable fires, there were only three kinds of fire for which no indemnity had to be made. These were fires resulting from the burning of heath in March, the fire of

[1] The text is ambiguous, but the above appears to be its meaning. The fire might be regarded as 'uncontrollable,' in which case no one was liable.

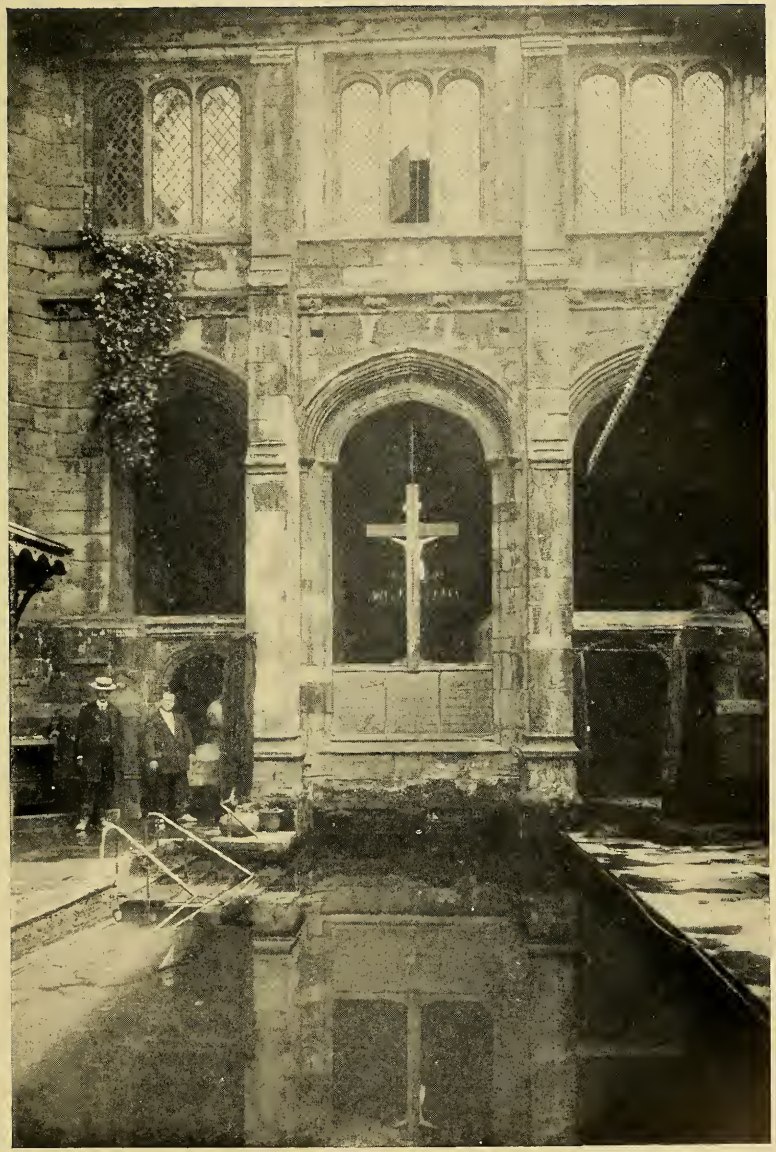


PLATE XXVII. ST. WINIFRED'S (OR WENEFREDE'S) WELL

*Photo Lettsome & Sons, Llangollen*

a smithy in a hamlet, and the fire of a bath in a hamlet. But for the smithy and bath-owner to be free from liability it was necessary that these two centres of danger should be seven fathoms distant from the nearest house, and the smithy had to be covered with shingles or tiles or sods, and not with thatch. This mention of the bath, which was obviously heated, is interesting, but it is doubtful of what nature these Welsh baths were. It may be that a rough type of Roman bath continued in use.

Not only was fire regarded as a definite object—it was treated as a thing which could act, just like an animal. Thus we read that "If swine enter a house and scatter the fire about so as to burn the house, and the swine escape, let the owner of the swine pay for their act. If the swine be burned, it is an equation between them; as being two irrational things; and, therefore, where there is an equation, by law, there is to be nothing redressed, but one is to be set against another." And again: "If a person, in carrying fire from the house of another, should occasion sparks to fly about, let him pay for his act; unless he can impute part of it to the fire."

As we shall see in the chapters which follow, the Welsh well knew how to use fire as an instrument of offence. Many a tribal leader was burnt out of his stronghold, and in later times many a Norman baron had to choose between being burnt to death or crushed by the falling walls of his blazing castle—which was often constructed mainly of wood—and attempting to cut through an encircling line of enemies, who rarely allowed him to escape unless themselves overpowered by numbers.

From this short account of Welsh laws and customs we must now turn to a further consideration of the political history of early Wales. Throughout the centuries immediately following, and perhaps we may say until the time of Giraldus, who flourished in the twelfth century, the Welsh mode of living altered very little. Throughout these centuries they were a hardy, warlike, energetic people, ever ready to leave

the plough to take up the sword, prepared to abandon their little homesteads for a time in order to retreat before a too powerful enemy, driving their flocks and herds before them and leaving nothing on which the invader could seize or subsist. Born fighters, mobile, excellent with the bow and dart, they lived for war, and it is of war that the succeeding chapters mainly treat.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE PERIOD OF THE PRINCES

### FROM THE DEATH OF CADWALADR TO THE ACCESSION OF GRUFFYDD AP LLYWELYN

(681[1]?–1023)

IT is perhaps inelegant to divide a period of history according to the deaths of its heroes rather than the accession of its princes, but the name of the prince who is mentioned in the *Brut y Tywysogion* as succeeding Cadwaladr is hardly known to students of history. On the other hand, the accession of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn marks a new phase in this history, and consequently forms a convenient point at which to terminate a chapter. Again, it is desirable to distinguish clearly between the period of the kings of Britain (kings though they were only in name) and that of the princes. We have consequently found it desirable to date this present chapter from the death of Cadwaladr, for with that event, as we have seen, " thenceforth the Britons lost the crown of the kingdom, and the Saxons gained it." We need not criticize too closely this statement in the *Chronicles of the Princes*, although doubtless the reader will agree that it is from the battle of Winwaed (655) that we should count the final overthrow of the pretensions of the British kings, which had for some few years, under the leadership of Cadwallawn, appeared so bright.

The history of this present period is by no means easy to write. Our authorities are extremely few. As Stephens has

[1] The learned authors of *The Welsh People* have pointed out that the Welsh chroniclers confounded Cadwaladr with Ceadwalla of Wessex, who died in 689; they believe Cadwaladr died about 664. See also p. 99.

pointed out, there is no reference in the writings of the bards or poets to any historical events during the centuries which separate the incidents which commence and terminate this chapter. Our most important authority is the *Chronicles of the Princes*, which, however, is extremely sparse in its facts until we reach the eleventh century. This work, which in the earliest manuscript form known to us dates from the first half of the fourteenth century, and which was written not improbably at the monasteries of Strata Florida and Conway, is peculiarly bare and dry in its facts, at least for these centuries. Later, when we come to consider the struggles between the Norman marchers and the Welsh princes, we find in it a comprehensive, interesting, and probably accurate account of those troublous times. When it is recounting the events of the eighth century it is very different. Frequently we find ten years or so passed by either without comment of any sort or with a mere reference to the fact that in such and such a year there was a hot summer (*e.g.* in 720), or an earthquake in Armorica—facts which really have neither interest nor value at the present time. The *Annales Cambriae* is but little, if any, more helpful. Sandwiched in between lengthy periods of which we know nothing we find the most unimportant events recorded We read of comets, and of how in 690 the moon was a blood-red colour; that in 684 there was an earthquake, and in 808 and 810 an eclipse of the sun and moon respectively;[1] but of actual doings of men, whether kings or princes, philosophers or poets, we know but little. The student of early English history has doubtless observed the same flaws in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; but the historian who would write the history of England has at his disposal a wealth of legal manuscripts, charters, and grants, unequalled, we believe, for the period with regard to any nation in Europe. Wales has handed down to us no such rich legacy. The meagreness of the accounts of the early chroniclers of Wales is doubtless due to the fact that

[1] The reason for the recounting of these natural phenomena is given us by Roger of Wendover, who says that they may lead men to see how Providence punishes evildoers!

they were attempting to make bricks without straw. The modern writer, or at any rate the present writer, feels that the straws have not increased considerably with the passing of the centuries.

It is a matter for surprise that the Welsh chroniclers found themselves unable to furnish a more detailed account of the early history of their country. We have already remarked that it was one of the three chief duties of the bards to record meritorious events in song. These bards must have so recorded many events now forgotten and unknown. That these songs were unwritten is probable, but that alone does not account for their complete disappearance from memory. As Macpherson, the learned translator and editor of the poems of Ossian, said many years ago, when speaking of the bards (primarily, it is true, of the Gaelic bards, of whom Ossian was perhaps the greatest), " The use of letters was not known till long after the institution of the bards: the records of the families of their patrons, their own, and more ancient poems, were handed down by tradition. Their poetical compositions were admirably combined for that purpose. They were adapted to music; and the most perfect harmony was observed. Each verse was so connected with those which preceded or followed it, that if one line had been remembered in a stanza, it was almost impossible to forget the rest. The cadences followed in so natural a gradation, and the words were so adapted to the common turn of the voice, after it is raised to a certain key, that it was almost impossible, from a similarity of sound, to substitute one word for another. This excellence is peculiar to the Celtic tongue, and is perhaps to be met with in no other language." Whether the above is applicable to the language of the Cymric bards of the ninth century equally with that of the Gaelic poets of Ireland and Scotland we are not prepared to say, but we may remind the reader that the early history of many nations is known to us only, or chiefly, through the songs of its singers. Garcilaso wrote the history of the Incas of Peru long after the Peruvians had lost all records of their history. His facts were gleaned

almost entirely from the poems which his mother, an Inca princess, taught him in his youth.

With these facts in our minds, and remembering the unusual prominence which was given to the bard and poet in Cymru, it is indeed strange that our materials are so sparse—and not only sparse, but dull. This state of the authorities seems to point to a decided decline in bardism; yet that cannot explain it, for in the laws of Howel (composed, not improbably, in the tenth century, at least as regards the part relating to the king's household) we find the bards apparently as numerous and as honourably placed as at any time in Welsh history.

The absence of ordinary historical evidence for the period is made all the more startling by the fact that Howel's laws, in part if not all, date from this time. That is to say, we have at once one of the most complete accounts of the laws of Cymru of that time with an almost complete absence of knowledge of the great contemporary historical events. Perhaps the truth is that the Welsh were not making history during these centuries; that even if the wit of their poets enabled them to make epics out of the petty squabbles of their princes, the works so constructed of such bare material interested but two people—the prince applauded and the poet who praised—and that consequently these songs founded no tradition, passed, indeed, into the limbo of forgotten things with the passing of the bard and his master. However this may be, we must now endeavour to roof the palace of a prince with straw insufficient to thatch the cottage of a *taeog*.

### Ivor and Rhodri Molwynog

After the death of Cadwaladr we are told that "Ivor, son of Alan, King of Armorica, which is called Little Britain, reigned; not as a king, but as chief or prince." This Armorica is, of course, another name for Brittany. Whether we can accept this story of a chief ruling the Cymry who had come from Brittany is uncertain. The Cymric tribal system is against it. On the other hand, it is known that during the Anglo-Saxon invasion many British refugees had fled to

Armorica, and it is obvious that all through the early centuries of our era a very close connexion existed between the Brythons of Brittany and Britain.

The king or prince who reigned after Ivor was a person of whom we know rather more. This prince, Rhodri Molwynog, was a contemporary of Aethelbald, king of Mercia. Aethelbald commenced to reign in A.D. 716. The date of Rhodri's accession was probably about 720, and, according to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, he was fighting in Cornwall and South Wales (presumably against the Saxons) in 721. The *Annales* assigns the year 722 to these actions. His death took place in 754. It is therefore fairly clear that this Rhodri—who must be kept clearly distinct from the later and more famous Rhodri Mawr (Roderick the Great)—was a prince who reigned in Wales for about thirty years. During these years it is not improbable that the Cymry were waging war against the Mercians. It was not, however, until the death of Rhodri and Aethelbald and the accession of Offa that the Mercian campaign against the Cymry comes into prominence. During Rhodri's reign we read of battles between the Picts and Britons. These are mentioned in both the *Annales Cambriae* and in the *Brut*. The latter gives the name of a battle fought at Maesydog between the Picts and the Britons, in which the Britons were apparently victorious and killed Talargan, king of the Picts. This may perhaps have a connexion with the Pictish campaign undertaken by Eadbert of Northumbria about this time. Possibly it refers to the terrible disaster which was inflicted on the combined Pictish and Saxon army by the Britons of Strathclyde during the former's march through Perthshire. The date of this British victory as given in the *Brut*, however, was 750, and Eadbert's defeat occurred in 756, two years after Rhodri's death.

Rhodri Molwynog was less fortunate in his successors than was Aethelbald. The Mercian left his country, growing rapidly in power, to a ruler bold, ambitious, and able. Offa of Mercia was, in fact, for many years the chief power in Britain, so that we find Pope Hadrian I in an epistle to Charlemagne referring

to him as *rex Anglorum* (which, however, cannot be translated as 'king of the English,' but rather as 'king of the Angles' —a lesser title in view of the fact that Mercia was essentially an Angle settlement). Wales, on the other hand, appears to have been divided between the two sons of Rhodri, Conan and Howel by name.

### Conan and Howel

These two princes chose to fight against one another rather than to unite against the common enemy. As a result we find the Mercian pushing the border of Cymru from the line of the Severn almost to the Wye. Apart from the time when Wulfhere was king of Mercia, all this fertile land had until now been part of Cymru. The struggle for this much-disputed territory does not, however, end with Offa. Later, as we shall see, many border fights were fought against the Norman barons before the counties of Shropshire and Hereford were finally relinquished by their one-time owners, the Welsh.

Some twenty-two years after the death of Rhodri we read of the "destruction" of the men of South Wales (Deheubarth) by Offa, and again in 780 or 784 we find Offa "spoiling the Britons in the summer-time." [1] The *Chronicles of the Princes* would have us believe that the Welsh also devastated the territory of Offa in the summer-time, and that it was as a result of this raid that Offa caused the dike to be dug which has been associated with his name ever since. This earthwork, we are told, extended "from one sea to the other, from the south, near Bristol, to the north, above Flint, between the monastery of Basingwerk and Coleshill." It consisted of an earthen rampart flanked by a ditch, extended for some

[1] The *Gwentian Brut* as quoted in the *Victoria History of Hereford*, p. 259, contains the following entries: "In 765, the Cymry devastated Mercia, and thereupon Offa made a greater Dike, called Offa's Dike, to divide Wales from Mercia." "In 776, the men of Gwent and Glamorgan entered Mercia and razed Offa's Dike level with the ground." "In 784, Offa made a Dike a second time, nearer to himself, leaving a piece of country between Wye and Severn where is the tribe of Elystan Glodrydd." As the learned writer in the *Victoria History* suggests, this probably accounts for the two sets of earthworks noticeable between Kennel Wood and Shoals Bank.

PLATE XXVIII. OFFA'S DIKE 144

*Showing Fosse on left*

*Photo Lettsome & Sons, Llangollen*

130 miles from and to the places where the Dee and the Wye run into the sea. Of it Dr. Hodgkin says: "Though we are distinctly told, on good authority, that the object of this huge work was a military defence, it is probable that, like the *Vallum* in Northumberland and the *Pfahlgraben* in Germany, it was also a geographical boundary, and served a useful purpose in time of peace, as marking the limit of two rival jurisdictions and clearly indicating to which of them pertained the duty of punishing robbery or murder committed on either side of the border." This dike, continues Dr. Hodgkin, probably commemorates the result of the "devastation of the southern Britons wrought by Offa which is noted by the Cambrian annals under the years 778 and 784." As to this we must add that the *Chronicles of the Princes* makes it doubtful whether this was the reason for the digging of the dike The two accounts do not quite tally in their facts or dates.

There is another dike which is found by the side of Offa's Dike through part of its length. Wat's Dike, as this second one is called, is believed to date from about the same period. Its purpose and origin are unknown.

During all these troublous times Conan and Howel appear to have been disputing as to the possession of Môn. The whole account of this period is, however, very unsatisfactory. In the first place, we have no reason to think that Rhodri Molwynog was king of the whole of Wales. It must always be borne in mind that there were at this period in Cymru many divisions of territory, all of which were at one time or another described as 'kingdoms.' Thus Gwynedd, Powys, Ceredigion, Demetia, Dyfed, Morgannwg, Gwent, Brycheiniog, Buellt, Ystrad Tywi, Rhufoniog, Cydweli, Gwyr, Môn, and later Deheubarth were all accounted kingdoms. Rhodri was not improbably king of North Wales, including Gwynedd and Môn.[1] In the second place, the dates are very doubtful. According to the early Welsh historian Caradog of Llancarvan, Conan is represented as succeeding Rhodri in 750 and reigning

[1] It may be that he ruled only over Môn. The territorial divisions of Wales in the eighth and ninth centuries are very confused.

until 817, in which year he died, after expelling his brother, Howel, from Môn. The *Chronicles of the Princes*, on the other hand, makes no mention of Conan (Kynan) until 812, when we find him fighting against his brother Howel. From that date until 817, when Conan died, the brothers seem to have occupied themselves with driving each other out of Môn in turn.

During all the years which elapse between the death of Rhodri (*c.* 754) and the first mention of Conan in the *Chronicles of the Princes* it does not appear that the men of North Wales had any outstanding leaders, although we read of a certain Caradog, king of Gwynedd, being killed by the Saxons in 798. Of the leaders of the Powysians—who suffered most heavily by the alteration of the border-line between Mercia and Wales—we know nothing. Of the history of South Wales we know but little more. As we have already said, it was mainly against the men of South Wales that the Mercian attack appears to have been launched. In 796 we read of the death of Morgatrud, king of the Demetiae.

With the death of Conan in 817 two new enemies appear. In that year we find the Saxons ravaging the country and seizing the kingdom of Rhufoniog, and from the sea appear for the first time the 'black pagans' who were destined in the future to cause so much misery, not only to Wales, but to England and Ireland as well.

### Merfyn Frych

Conan left as heiress to his distracted kingdom a daughter. This daughter, Esyllht, was either the mother or the wife of Merfyn Frych, Conan's successor. The relationship between this prince and his predecessor is somewhat difficult to determine with accuracy. In the earlier manuscripts he appears to have been the son of Esyllht vz Conan, in the later authorities she is named as his wife. It seems clear that he succeeded to the realm in consequence of Esyllht's title thereto. This would point to the relationship being that of mother and son, since the Welsh law of succession, though it sometimes

recognizes succession through a mother, never allows a claim through a wife. This, however, is by no means conclusive, since it appears that his subjects regarded his title to the throne as very defective. At least his reign was nicknamed 'Injustice,' probably in reference to the fact that they looked upon his seizure of the crown as contrary to law and justice.

Mr. Nicholson has perhaps solved the difficulty by his suggestion that the many early Welsh genealogies are not in all cases tables of descent, but of succession. The passage which would make Merfyn the son of Esyllht runs as follows: *map Rotri mermin map Etthil merch cinnan.* Mr. Nicholson has shown that the tendency of the scribe who copied out the earlier tables into the form we now possess was in the habit of substituting *map* (son) for *guor* (over or before), and he would replace the above corrupted text by the following: *guor Rotri mermin gur* [not *guor*] *Etthil merch cinnan* = "before Rhodri, Merfyn—husband [= *gur*, which the scribe read *guor* and replaced by *map*, as usual] of Esyllht the daughter of Conan." If this very ingenious argument is sound we must regard Merfyn as Esyllht's husband rather than her son.

Merfyn Frych would appear to have come originally from the Isle of Man. The bards have at least informed us that he came from the land of Manaw. This may mean either the Isle of Man or Manaw in Scotland. In determining which of these two places gave him to Wales we are at once helped and perplexed by his ancestry. We are told on the one hand that he was a descendant of Llywarch Hên, the poet who suffered so grievously in the sack of Viroconium, and who was a Prince of Strathclyde. This, of course, points to a Scottish or Cumbrian origin. On the other hand, his father was one called Gwriad, and within recent years a ninth-century inscription has been unearthed in the Isle of Man bearing the words *Crux Guriat* ('The Cross of Gwriad'). This is strong evidence that he came from the little island in the Irish Sea. Again, when we read 'Manaw' in early documents it means *prima facie* the Isle of Man. We will therefore regard Merfyn as a native of that island.

Merfyn's reign lasted until 844, and very few events took place during it of which we have any knowledge. In 823 he appears to have been at war with the Saxons, who, we read, destroyed the castle of Deganwy (the ancient seat of the house of Cunedda). This campaign was probably directed mainly against Powys, and may have been one of Egbert's onslaughts, although Egbert would appear to have led his army against Powys in 830 and not in 823. Another fact of great significance is mentioned in the chronicles of this period—the appearance of the 'black pagans.'

It was with these 'black pagans' (Norsemen and Danes[1]) that the Angles, Saxons, and Welsh were to wage bitter war throughout the remaining years of the ninth century. The great champion of the Anglo-Saxon race during the most critical years of the second phase of that struggle was Alfred; of the Welsh, Rhodri. Both, in consequence, probably, of the energy with which they beat back the new enemy, earned the title of 'the Great.' Alfred, it is true, won this title in many ways. A great soldier, an enlightened monarch, a renowned lawgiver, and a beneficent patron of the arts and of all learning, he is undoubtedly the outstanding figure of pre-Norman England. His wise men came from many parts, his energies sent men on missions of inquiry to many lands. We even read, in a tenth-century work, of his sending a medical mission to Helias, Patriarch of Jerusalem, for some good recipes. In truth Alfred was in many ways a great man and was far in advance of his time.

### Rhodri Mawr

Rhodri Mawr's title to greatness is rather to be traced to the extent of his territories and his worth as a soldier. Yet even so limited he was undoubtedly one of the most famous of the descendants of Cunedda.

If we accept Mr. Nicholson's account of the genealogy of Merfyn Frych, we must regard Rhodri as the son of Merfyn and his wife Esyllht and grandson of Nest, Princess of Powys.

[1] The Danes are generally referred to as 'white pagans.'

PLATE XXIX. REMAINS OF THE LATER CASTLE OF DEGANWY 148

*A. Netherwood, R C.A.*

*By permission of the Artist*

His wife was Angharad vz Meurig ap Dyfnwallon, whose brother ruled over Seisyllwg.

These relationships are in this particular case of some importance, since Rhodri, in virtue of his right of succession to his grandmother, mother, and (presumably) wife, claimed nearly the whole of Wales as his kingdom, and thus for a few years was able to make the Cymry true countrymen. Thus united, we find them beating back the Danes with apparent success.

As we have seen, Rhodri obtained the kingdom of Gwynedd on the death of Merfyn Frych in 844. Powys became his on the death of Cyngen, last of the royal house of the central kingdom, who died while on a pilgrimage to Rome in 855. Seisyllwg, the kingdom made from the conjunction of Ceredigion and Ystrad Tywi, probably fell under his sway much later. We find Gwgon ruling over Ceredigion until 872, when he was drowned. Gwgon was the brother of Angharad, Rhodri's wife, and the time of his death probably synchronizes with Rhodri's acquisition of that part of Wales. Rhodri was now king of the whole of Wales, save only Dyfed and Gwent and certain other minor parts.

Before Rhodri obtained control over Powys, and while yet Cyngen was ruling over that kingdom, the Mercians—who were the continual enemies of Wales, and had already, as we have seen, made incursions into Powys in 823 or 830 under Egbert of Wessex—renewed the attack. This was in 853, when Aethelwulf was king of Wessex. Burhred was then king of Mercia, and we find him in that year appealing to his overlord Aethelwulf for help against the men of North Wales. Aethelwulf responded, and the combined expedition was, apparently, successful. It is not clear against whom this campaign was directed, but it would seem probable that already at this time Rhodri was controlling Powys—at that time not improbably neglected by its pilgrim-king. The "men of North Wales" looks like Rhodri's men, and Rhodri was the only leader in Wales who was at that time powerful enough to make it necessary for the king of Mercia to call in to his aid the West Saxons.

Mercia was, of course, at this time a much weaker state than in the time of Offa. So too was Wessex. The reason for the weakness of the West Saxon kingdom was connected with the cause of Rhodri's strength. There is good reason to believe that the Dane was already proving a much greater enemy to the Saxons than to the Welsh. It became necessary for both Wessex and Mercia to husband their resources in order to cope with the new danger. The consequence was that the Welsh border knew comparative peace. It will be remembered, perhaps, that under date 855 the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* contains the significant entry, " In this year heathen men first remained over winter in Sheppey." That marks the end of the period of mere plunder and the commencement of the period of Danish settlement. Henceforward the Saxon kings of England had little time to give to any attempted conquest or annoyance or plunder of Wales.

### The 'Black Pagans'

It will doubtless be present to the mind of the reader that the Danes settled extensively in England between 855 and 896, and conquered England in 1016, when Cnut became king. It was while England was still largely peopled by Danes that the Norman Conquest occurred. It is therefore obvious that the Danish invasion introduced a new race into England, whose customs and racial characteristics have doubtless had considerable influence upon English history. It was, however, different in the case of Wales. To a great extent the Danes came to Wales, not to settle or to conquer, but to plunder. Plunder they doubtless did. The consequent loss was, for the moment, considerable, but such excursions had no great national effect.

It is, however, quite obvious that the Danes did settle to some extent in Wales. One cannot explain the Danish and Norse place-names found around the coast of Wales on the plunder theory simply. A town was not likely to call itself by a Norse name because it had been sacked by the 'black pagans' or because a neighbouring monastery had been

robbed of its plate. Yet we find such names as Grasholm instead of the older Gwales; Fishguard for Abergwaun; Cymric Môn becomes Danish Anglesey. Priestholm and Swansea obviously owe their name to the same race. All these places are either islands or coast towns. In the interior no Danish place-names are to be found. The inference is that the Danes settled in a few ports and islands, but for the main contented themselves with plundering the neighbouring Welsh tribes.

We know most, perhaps, of the occupation of Anglesey. The name of this island is curious. At first sight it would appear to mean 'the island of the Angles'—just as Chelsea means 'the island of the chisels.' William of Malmesbury, indeed, suggested that this was its meaning, and regarded Eadwine's conquest of it as being the cause of its new name. This would be some time after 617. This derivation has the support of some eminent historians, but within recent years it has been suggested that the name is Norse and means 'the island on the fiord,' from *öngull*, a fiord. The word Ongulsey is found in the *Orkneyinga Saga*, and this derivation has the added advantage of explaining why Anglesey is referred to as Môn, quite universally, long after Eadwine of Deira was dead. Môn, indeed, is always the name for Anglesey in the Welsh sources.

It would seem that the 'black pagans' first swept down upon Anglesey in 853. The loss of this part of Cymru would have been a serious blow to the house of Gwynedd. Aberffraw, their ancestral seat, was situated in the island. The royal demesne lands were there. Anglesey was at that time the garden of Wales. Fertile and populous, it bore a very different aspect then from its present one. In 853 the attack seems to have been a sudden one for the purpose of plunder. Probably the Welsh were surprised. We do not read of any organized resistance on the one hand or of any prolonged stay on the other. Anglesey was 'ravaged.' Three years later Rhodri obtained his revenge when he slew Horm, the leader of the Danes. This did not, however, terminate or even postpone

the struggle. In 877 (or 876) there appears to have been a battle of considerable size fought in Anglesey—'the battle on the Sunday.' The Cymry seem to have been defeated, and we find Rhodri passing over to Ireland, whether as one seeking safety or help we cannot say—although the Irish chronicles suggest the former alternative. However this may be, next year we find him back again. This time his enemies would appear to have been, not the Danes, but the Saxons. In that year we have the entry in the *Annales Cambriae*: *Rotri et filius* [*frater?*] *eius guriat a saxonibus iugulatur.* This slaying of the leader of their nation by the Saxons was regarded as a great loss by the Welsh. A few years later we find the chroniclers glorying in the battle of Conway and acclaiming it as "God's vengeance for the slaughter of Rhodri."

Some authorities regard 'the battle on the Sunday' as having been fought between Welshman and Mercian. There is really no direct evidence of this. On the other hand, it is improbable that two Christian kings would in those days have chosen a holy day on which to fight. Mercia was now, of course, Christian.[1] It would have been thought unfortunate to choose such a day for battle. This, then, points to a heathen foe. We know the Danes were in the Irish Sea about this time, and there is nothing antecedently improbable in their attempt to repeat their successful plundering campaign of 853. On the other hand, we have no reason to believe that Mercia, or Wessex, or both, were in a position to strike right through North Wales, cross the Menai Straits, and attack Rhodri in the very centre (politically) of his kingdom. Had this been so, seeing that the Welsh were badly defeated, the probabilities are that Mercia would have had some sort of permanent footing in North Wales; yet such was not the case. We may therefore take it that 'the battle on a Sunday' was fought against the Norsemen, who were not intent on settlement, but on plunder.

[1] In the *Codex Diplomaticus* we have preserved an interesting grant of a steelyard to Bishop Alhune by Burhred of Mercia for the benefit of his soul—but the cleric had to pay pretty stiffly for the privilege notwithstanding.

All through Rhodri's reign it is probable that he was defending his state from the Danes on the west and north and from the Mercians on the east. The help of Aethelwulf enabled Mercia to resist the Welsh attacks. Of what preceded the Saxon incursion which led to Rhodri's last defeat we really know nothing. The result was the death of a gallant man and the redivision of Wales.

### Anarawd, Cadell, and Merfyn

Of Rhodri's six sons we are content to mention the three who appear to have divided their father's kingdom between them. These three were Anarawd, Cadell, and Merfyn. Anarawd, as the eldest son, took Anglesey and Gwynedd. Cadell obtained as his share a large part of South Wales. Merfyn, doubtless, took some considerable part of Wales, but what part is unknown. It will be observed that the above division takes no notice of Powys. Possibly the Mercians were still contesting the possession of this part of Cymru; possibly this was Merfyn's share. We do not know.

North and South Wales have at various times disputed somewhat warmly which of these three sons was the eldest, arguing that upon that depends whether North Wales or South Wales is historically the more important. A somewhat empty discussion one would have thought, especially when one remembers that England went to a younger son and Normandy to the elder. From the authorities it is difficult to say whether Anarawd or Cadell was the senior. Some say one, some another. To us, however, the fact that Anarawd inherited the principality of Gwynedd and Môn—a principality which had been his ancestors' from the foundation of the dynasty—seems to us conclusive. Whoever became Prince of Gwynedd and lord of Aberffraw was without question either the eldest son or the ouster of the eldest son, and there is ample evidence to show that the latter alternative cannot be accepted.[1]

These three sons seem, indeed, to have worked together harmoniously. They seem, however, to have been terrors to

[1] Asser also gives Anarawd priority of place.

the neighbouring princes. We find Hyfaidd, Prince of Dyfed, Elise ap Tewdwr of Brycheiniog, Howel of Glywysing, and the sons of Meurig of Gwent all in turn seeking the protection of Alfred,[1] now become, by his victory at Ethandune (878), the predominant power in England. Hyfaidd's position was rather interesting. He himself had been a notorious persecutor of the monks of St. David's, from whom he doubtless exacted the uttermost he could. After he had sought the protection of Alfred we find Asser, Bishop of St. David's, journeying to Alfred's court because he believed that he could better protect St. David's as servant of Hyfaidd's protector than by remaining in Wales. Whether his extremely shrewd analysis of the situation proved correct we do not know. At least we must be thankful that he made the change. To that we owe much, if not most, of our knowledge of Alfred and his times.

### Alfred and the Danes

We must now turn once again to Mercia. In 881 we find Aethelred of Mercia leading his army through the mountains of North Wales. This movement was checked and Aethelred's hopes finally dispelled by the battle of Conway, fought in that year. In this battle Anarawd decisively defeated the Mercian, inflicting heavy loss on his army.

Anarawd seems now to have adopted the extreme course of entering into an alliance with the Danes, who had been slowly conquering the north of England. The arrangement does not seem, however, to have worked satisfactorily, and so we find him making submission to Alfred. Now for the first time we read of a Welsh prince paying a ceremonious visit to an English king. Anarawd appears to have been treated with much honour and courtesy at the court of Alfred. It was possibly as a result of these friendly overtures and the equally friendly reception of them that we find the armies of Saxon and Welshman ranged side by side at the battle of Buttington. The Welsh who fought there were "some part of the North

[1] We give the common spelling. More correctly it should be Aelfred.

Welsh race." They fought as opponents of one common enemy, the Danes. The result was a severe check to the Danish arms, which had previously, during the years 892–893, ravaged and devastated the whole of southern England.

Who these men of the 'North Welsh' race were is not clear. The chronicle may be distinguishing them from the West Welsh of Cornwall; it may be that they were men of what we should now call South Wales. It seems to us, however, that it is not improbable that Anarawd had broken his earlier treaty with the Danes for some good reason which had at once driven him to Alfred and made him their bitter enemy. If this be so, we can reasonably infer that his men may have fought by the side of Mercian and West Saxon in this battle on the banks of the Severn. We find Anarawd aided in turn by the English in a campaign which he was directing against his brother Cadell. Confusion is introduced, however, into a line of argument which, in our opinion, would otherwise prove conclusively that it was Anarawd's men who fought at Buttington by the fact that early in 894 we find the Mercians raiding North Wales—doubtless in search of the food which the Danish raids had completely destroyed in their own country of Mercia.

All these years the Danes were plundering and devastating England. The genius of Alfred had checked them time after time, but their numbers were considerable and they seem to have gloried in war. We find them, therefore, ravaging the Severn valley in 895. They reached Quatbridge, not far from Bridgnorth. From there as a centre for operations they destroyed Mercia and the Welsh principalities of Loyer, Brycheiniog, Gwent, and Gwynllwg. The next year we read of the Black Normans coming a second time to Castle Baldwin.

For the next few years there was comparative peace. In 902, however, the Celtic victory over the Danes in Ireland resulted in the Northmen crossing the Irish Channel and attacking Anglesey once more. Their leader, Hingamund, was beaten back by the men of Anglesey, and this campaign of aggression seems to have been abandoned. The 'black

pagans' are next found attacking Chester, at that time under the control of Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians and daughter of Alfred. She too resisted the attacks of the Danes, and in later years we find her attacking and invading Brycheiniog, storming the royal residence, and capturing the queen, who was probably the wife of Tewdwr ap Elise. In the intervening years this most active lady had protected her realm from the risk of Welsh attacks by building a chain of forts on Mercia's western frontier.

Meanwhile, in 915, a few months before Aethelflaed's invasion, the Danes had appeared in the estuary of the Severn and had attacked and ravaged southern Wales. They appear to have pushed forward to the north, and had almost reached Hereford when they succeeded in capturing a valuable prisoner in the person of Cyfeiliog, Bishop of Llandaff. He was eventually ransomed from captivity by Edward the Elder, who as soon as the bishop was released took steps to secure the departure of the pirates. We find them retiring to Ireland, passing through Dyfed on their way thither.

We have now reached the year 916. In this year Anarawd of Gwynedd died. His brothers had predeceased him, Merfyn having died in the early years of the tenth century and Cadell in 909. Merfyn seems to have transmitted no royal inheritance to any successor. The principality over which Cadell had ruled was now divided between his sons Howel and Clydog. Gwynedd owned as its prince Idwal the Bald ap Anarawd. Of these new princes, Clydog died in 920, so that we have Seisyllwg, and possibly Dyfed, ruled over by Howel, Gwynedd by Idwal the Bald (Idwal Voel).

Henceforward it would appear that Seisyllwg and Dyfed became merged in the principality of Deheubarth. However this may be, it is tolerably certain that that district was ruled over by Howel, named Dha, or 'the Good.'

### Howel Dha

This prince is, perhaps, of all the Welsh princes the most famous—with, it may be, the exception of Llywelyn the Great

PLATE XXX. MAP OF WALES BY HUMPHREY LLWYD 156

*Photo H. Culliford, Aberystwyth*

—and his fame rests entirely upon his qualities as a law-maker. Like Alfred, he appears to have been a man of learning who had widened his outlook on life by a journey to the imperial city of Rome. This occurred about 928. The exact date is uncertain. In the preface to the *Dimetian Code* we read: "After the law had been made and written, Howel, accompanied by Princes of Cymru, and Lambert, Bishop of Menevia, and Mordav, Bishop of Bangor, and Cebur, Bishop of St. Asaph, and Blegywryd, Archdeacon of Llandaff, went to Rome to Pope Anastasius to read the law and to see if there was anything contrary to the law of God in it; and as there was nothing militating against it, it was confirmed, and was called the law of Howel Dha from that time forward." Anastasius III held the papacy from 911–913. In opposition to this we find the *Chronicles of the Princes* referring to Howel's journey to Rome as taking place in 926. The *Annales Cambriae* gives the date as 928. It is hardly probable that Howel journeyed to Rome with his lawyers and laws in 913, since he only succeeded to a half-share in his principality in 909. Taking all things into consideration, we are inclined to fix the date as 928, during the pontificate of Leo VI. It is also highly probable that the account of this journey given in the Welsh code is inaccurate in other ways besides the date. There is reason to believe that Howel did not compile his laws until he had become king of Cymru in 941 or 942, on the death of Idwal of Gwynedd. Both the *Venedotian* and the *Dimetian Code* expressly refer to him as king of *all* Cymru, and it must be remembered that the code of Howel Dha is tripartite and is concerned with the laws and customs of the whole of Wales, thus suggesting that the prince who authorized the compilation had control over the part of the country affected. On the other hand, the *Gwentian Code* refers to him as king of Cymru —a difference which we might expect, since Howel was never king of Gwent or Morgannwg. If the above be correct, it is not probable that Howel's journey to Rome had any very intimate connexion with his laws. It was

simply a journey undertaken to acquire culture, learning, and experience.

Another sign that Howel was intellectually superior to most of the Welsh princes of that age is to be found in his dealings and transactions with the court of Aethelstan. It would appear that Aethelstan, after the expulsion of Guthfred from Northumbria in 926, marched against the Welsh. In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* we read that he subjugated all the kings who were in this island, including Howel, king of the West Welsh, and Owain, king of Gwent. The West Welsh were, of course, the men of Cornwall. The chronicler may, however, have been wrong in so describing them. It may have been that the Howel referred to was Howel of Deheubarth —Howel Dha. We may take it that Aethelstan summoned the leading Welsh princes to Hereford in 927, and imposed a tribute upon them of gold, silver, cattle, dogs, and hawks. After this time we frequently find Howel's signature appended to grants made by Aethelstan. Concerning this signing of Saxon grants, Professor Lloyd has said: "It is . . . a significant fact that Hywel is of all the Welsh princes the most prominent in this connexion; from 928 to 949 his name is appended to every charter which has Welsh signatures, and is among them placed first; in three cases he is the only under-king who joins in the grant. He is often supported by Idwal Foel and Morgan ab Owain of Morgannwg, and once by Tewdwr ab Elisedd of Brycheiniog, but no prince seems to have entered so heartily into Athelstan's design of linking Wales with England by this system of attendance at the English court. All that is known of Hywel points him out as a warm admirer, not only of Alfred, but also of English civilization. He led no expedition across the border, but instead secured to Athelstan the faithful allegiance of his brother chiefs, even in that year of rebellion, 937, when the league against Wessex included the Scots, the Danes, and the Strathclyde Britons, and only the southern Britons held aloof. English influence is manifest in the law of Hywel, and betrays itself even in the naming of his sons, for Edwin ap Hywel Dda

bore an English name, which was possibly given him out of compliment to the young son of Edward the Elder who perished in 933." [1]

As we have said, Howel's fame rests on his laws. These we have already considered. We are by no means convinced that they show any great dependence on or obligation to the Saxon dooms. In many ways the systems are similar, but the laws as we have them (they were, of course, augmented in the succeeding centuries) are very much fuller and more developed than the dooms of either Alfred or Aethelstan. Alfred's dooms are, of course, largely Mosaic. Aethelstan's are more valuable as mirroring the Anglo-Saxon law. Neither are to be compared in fullness or in legal excellence with Howel's compilations. If Howel copied at all, we believe that it was from the Continental codes and the *Leges Barbarorum* rather than from the dooms of contemporary English kings.

Howel's friendship with the house of Aethelstan stood him in excellent stead during the troublous times of 942. In that year Idwal Voel, the son of Anarawd, revolted against Eadmund, who had succeeded Aethelstan on the latter's death in 940. The result was disastrous to the Welsh prince, he and his brother Elisedd being slain by the Saxons in battle. Idwal Voel left as heirs Iago and Idwal Ieuaf (the younger). These appear to have been but youths, and we find Howel (who was probably supported by Wessex) expelling them from their principality and claiming it for himself. Howel was now king of most of Wales. It is not improbable that he had already obtained control over Powys. Morgannwg and Gwent were still, and remained, separate states.

It is this unification of Wales that rendered the codification of Welsh laws and tribal customs practicable. That all the laws now known as the Laws of Howel Dha really date from his reign is more than improbable. Many of the texts contain

[1] Lloyd, *History of Wales*, vol. i, pp. 336, 337. It will be observed that the names are spelt differently from our text. It is to be regretted that there is no standardization of the spelling of Welsh names. The same difficulty is found to a lesser degree in Anglo-Saxon names—*e.g.* Cnut, Knut, Canute; Ecgbryht or Egbert; Aethelstan or Athelstan, etc.

important amplifications dating from the time of Rhys ap Gruffydd, who died in 1197. As to one of the codes—the Gwentian—it has been suggested that it is a compilation made by Morgeneu and his son Cyfnerth, and was not dependent for its inception upon Howel. However this may be, it is clear that Howel's laws formed the basis and a considerable part of the finest code of laws compiled in Britain in the tenth century. In our opinion English law has nothing to equal it until the time of Ranulf de Glanville, and it may be that we should say until the time of Henry Bracton.[1]

Howel died in 950. On his death Wales was once more divided, and became subject to various rulers. Yet although he did not leave the Welsh a united nation capable of remaining united, he left them a written code of laws which could not have but made for better government and a better administration of justice.

### Owain

From the death of Howel until the accession of Maredudd ap Owain in 986 no event stands out or appears worthy of any special mention. Throughout the intervening years the country was in a state of confusion owing to the tribal wars fomented by the sons of Idwal Voel on the one side and the sons of Howel Dha on the other. We have already seen how Howel seized the crown of Gwynedd on the death of Idwal Voel in the battle fought by him against Eadmund. At that time Idwal Voel's sons—Iago and Idwal Ieuaf—were young, and Howel was strong enough to override their pretensions to their father's throne. On the death of Howel the position was very different.

Howel left as sons to succeed him Rhodri, Eadwine (or Edwin), and Owain. The first two died in 953 and 954 respectively, leaving Owain sole successor to his father's dignities.

[1] The late Professor Maitland pointed out many years ago in the *Law Quarterly Review* that these Welsh codes had received far too little attention from students of early law.

In the meantime—that is to say, between the death of Howel and Edwin—the sons of Idwal Voel had defeated the sons of Howel in the battle of Nant Carno, thereby recovering the principality of Gwynedd, and possibly Powys also. Following this success we find Iago and Idwal Ieuaf ravaging Dyfed, and Owain retaliating by marching into North Wales, doubtless carrying fire and slaughter through the land. He was eventually checked by the defeat inflicted upon him at the battle of Llanrwst. He and his men retired, followed by the victorious men of Gwynedd, who in turn ravaged Ceredigion. All this, of course, points to a number of petty squabbles between princelings, mere border raids, carried on by one side or the other with varying success. To add to the confusion we find civil war breaking out in Gwynedd, and Idwal Ieuaf and Iago engaging in battle. In 969 Idwal Ieuaf was captured by Iago, who caused him to be blinded, and of him we hear no more. Ieuaf's son, Howel, avenged his father's fate by capturing Iago in 979. Howel ap Ieuaf (Howel Ddrwg, or 'the Bad') now becomes Prince of Gwynedd. On his death in 985 he was succeeded by his brother Cadwallawn.

While all these tribal and civil wars were in progress it is evident that the Saxons were ever ready to take advantage of the weak state of Wales. It is also probable that the 'black pagans' were still hovering round the Welsh coast.

In 965 (perhaps it was 968: the various chronicles do not agree) we read of the English invading and ravaging Gwynedd. On the whole, however, we do not find the king of England—Edgar the Peaceful—taking any great advantage of the disorganized state of Wales. The princes of Wales had for some time acknowledged the king of Wessex, and later the king of the English, as overlord. Edgar appears to have found it convenient to require the sub-kings to recognize his title anew. We therefore read of his going to Chester and summoning eight under-kings to swear fealty and do homage to him. Of these eight five were Welsh. Afterward, according to William of Malmesbury, the king caused these princes,

as a mark of their vassalage, to row him in his royal barge from the palace at Chester to the monastery of St. John the Baptist, and from thence back again. Although all this must not be accepted as quite accurate history, there is, perhaps, some truth behind it.[1] It is by no means improbable that Edgar should at this time require fresh oaths of fealty from the turbulent Welshmen, and there are in existence several examples of charters signed by Idwal Ieuaf and Iago as sub-kings under him.

While the fratricidal struggle was in progress between Iago and Ieuaf in Gwynedd, Owain of Deheubarth appears to have cast covetous eyes upon Morgannwg and Gwent. We read of certain raids and skirmishes, but the engagements seem to have been unimportant and to have had no lasting result. In one of the encounters we read of the death of one of Owain's sons, Einion.

We have now reached the year 986. Owain was by this time an old man, unfitted for the burdens of kingship in such troublous times. We therefore find him abdicating in favour of his son Maredudd.

## Maredudd ap Owain

Maredudd ap Owain seems to have been an energetic and valiant prince. At the very commencement of his reign he won a signal victory over Cadwallawn ap Ieuaf, with the result that Gwynedd and Deheubarth were united once more under one ruler. Apparently Dyfed and Gwyr were also under his control, in which case it may be that the encounter in which Einion lost his life was more important than we have given it credit for being.

Maredudd's chief concern during his short reign (986–999)

[1] The story, with variations, comes from many sources. It is mentioned in the *Brut y Tywysogion* (Caerleon-upon-Usk is given as the meeting-place) and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (which places the incident at Chester), as well as by Florence of Worcester (again Chester is the place suggested). Aelfric in his life of St. Swithin confirms it by inference. In view of the fact that the ceremony was probably connected with Edgar's coronation at Bath it may be that Caerleon-upon-Usk was the place of meeting.

appears to have been the 'black pagans.' In 988 we read of his ransoming captives at the rate of 1*d.* per person. Three years before this we read that "Godfrey, son of Harold, with the black host, devastated the Isle of Mona, and 2000 men were blinded [*Annales Cambriae* = captured], and the remainder Maredudd, son of Owain, took with him to Ceredigion and Dyved." This seems to point to a wholesale evacuation of Anglesey. It is not improbable that it was some of these 2000 captives (we discredit the entry in the *Brut* relating to the blinding of the men) whom Maredudd in later years redeemed. In 990 we read that "Eadwine, son of Einion, with Edis the Great, a Saxon prince from the seas of the south, devastated all the kingdoms of Maredudd, to wit, Dyved, and Ceredigion, and Gower [Gwyr], and Cydweli; and a second time took hostages from all the territory; and devastated Menevia a third time." Who Edis the Great may have been we do not know, but the combination of Welshman and Saxon seems to have pressed heavily upon Maredudd, for we find him adopting the extraordinary policy of "hiring the pagans willing to join him" in order to beat back his enemies. With these pagan auxiliaries we read of his devastating Morgannwg. In 993 retribution came for this unholy alliance and the spoiling of Morgannwg, for in that year Maredudd's territories were laid waste by plague, and while his kingdom was still staggering from this misfortune its king was attacked and defeated by the sons of Meurig (a dispossessed prince of Gwynedd).

During all these years it must be remembered that the Danes were almost certainly harassing the coast-line. In 994 we find Sweyn, a Danish leader, laying waste the Isle of Man; this was doubtless but one of several similar excursions. Maredudd's reign must have been a singularly troublous one, containing as it did attacks by the Danes and the Saxons, Edwin ap Einion and the sons of Meurig ap Idwal Voel of Gwynedd, and, last—and probably worst—the plague. With his death his kingdom, wasted by these numerous misfortunes and attacks, relapsed into a state of anarchy.

### Llywelyn ap Seisyll

We propose to say very little of the succeeding decade. Gwynedd returned to the old dynasty of Cunedda, Conan, grandson of Idwal Ieuaf, recovering that principality from the house of Deheubarth.

As to Deheubarth, it seems to have fallen into a completely disorganized state. Maredudd had died leaving no sons. The progeny of his elder brother, Einion, were, on the other hand, numerous. The eldest of these, Edwin, had in Maredudd's lifetime made several attempts to recapture the throne. These attempts not improbably continued against Maredudd's heiress, Angharad, and her husband, Llywelyn ap Seisyll.

It would appear, however, that the occupant of the precarious throne of Deheubarth had to fear the claims of pretenders more than what, to us, look like the legitimate demands of Edwin, his brothers or descendants. Llywelyn himself could boast of no title to the principality save through his wife, and consequently it was upon his own right arm that he had to rely.

Pretender after pretender now arose. The first, Aeddan ap Blegywryd, laid claim to the crown of Gwynedd. He appears to have been successful, but was eventually defeated in battle and killed, with his four sons. This occurred in 1018, and established Llywelyn's claim to Gwynedd.

Another of these pretenders was Rhydderch ap Iestyn, who was, however, somewhat later in date, and appears to have captured Deheubarth in 1023, and retained control thereof for ten years. In the meantime we read in the *Chronicles of the Princes*, under date 1020, that "A certain Scot falsely pretended to be the son of King Maredudd, and caused himself to be named king; and the men of the south received him as their lord, and to a kingdom; and his name was Rein. And Llywelyn, son of Seisyll, supreme King of Gwynedd, and the chief and most renowned king of all the Britons, made war against him. In his time it was usual for the elders of his kingdom to say that his dominion was from one sea to the

other; complete in abundance of wealth and inhabitants; so that it was supposed there was neither poor nor destitute in all his territories, nor an empty hamlet, nor any deficiency. And then Rein the Scot boldly led on his host, and, after the manner of the Scots, proudly and ostentatiously exhorted his men to fight, confidently promising them that he should conquer, and so he boldly approached his enemies, and they coolly and fearlessly awaited that vaunting and arrogant challenger. He, daring and fearless, repaired to the conflict, and after the battle was fought, with a general slaughter on both sides, and constant fighting, through the bravery of the Gwyneddians, victory was obtained over Rein the Scot and his host. And as it is proverbially said, 'Excite thy dog, but do not pursue'; he assaulted bravely and fearlessly, and retreated shamefully in a fox-like manner. And the Gwyneddians wrathfully pursued him, slaying his men, and devastating the country, pillaging every place and destroying it as far as Mercia; and he never from henceforward made his appearance."

This victory at Abergwyli, in conjunction with the earlier defeat of Aeddan, gave to Llywelyn the supreme power in Wales. He was not destined to enjoy for long the high position his resource had won for him, for he lived but two years after the defeat of the Scot.

It will doubtless have been observed by the reader that the reign of Llywelyn is represented by the chronicler in glowing terms as a sort of Golden Age of plenty and prosperity. It is not possible to say at this distance of time whether this was so or not. It is certain that the throne of Gwynedd was made during this time the bone of contention between several persons. This, however, may have had but little effect on the general prosperity of the people. We believe that these dynastic (if such a word can be used) struggles were mainly family feuds, very limited in extent. On the other hand, there is good reason to believe that Wales for the first time for centuries enjoyed a complete freedom from Saxon attack. During the years 978–1016 the throne of England was

occupied by the semi-lunatic Aethelred the Redeless, who was too busy mismanaging his kingdom and too much occupied in losing it completely to the Danes to have any time for harassing the Welsh. This breathing-space no doubt enabled Wales to become more prosperous. Had Cymru possessed but one great leader during those years of external peace, he might have united the broken links; he might have welded a bond of unity which would have enabled the Welsh to stand side by side in vigorous resistance of, first, the Danes and, later, the Normans. Unfortunately, Wales throughout its early history was cursed with a tribal system which practically made unity impossible. The old evil, then, lived on. For a few years Llywelyn was king of Wales—and then again disruption.

Although it is probable, as we have said, that Wales enjoyed peace on its eastern borders during the reign of Aethelred, the tale was very different on the sea-coast. Time after time the Danish pirates beat down on the coast of Wales. Professor Lloyd sums up the position admirably, and we content ourselves with a quotation from his *History of Wales*: "It was unusual during the half-century between 950 and 1000 for more than five years to pass without a Danish attack upon some quarter of Wales important enough to be recorded in some chronicle of the time. Anglesey, Lleyn, Dyfed, and the shores of the Severn especially suffered from this scourge, but no part of the coast was wholly secure. As in the ninth century, the raiders were chiefly attracted by the plunder of the monasteries; the sack of Aberffraw, the royal seat of Gwynedd, in 968 stands alone, for the other places said to have been raided by the foreigners were all the sites of important churches. Holyhead was despoiled in 961, Towyn in 963, Penmon in 971, Clynnog in 978, Mynyn (St. David's) in 982, 988, and 999, and in 988 a whole series of sanctuaries, including Llanbadarn Fawr, Llandudoch (St. Dogmael's), Llanilltud, and Llancarfan." Continuing, he adds: "Magnus, or Maccus, son of Harold . . . in 971 made a descent upon Penmon, while his brother Godfrey, who succeeded him about 977, appears on four occasions as

the leader of a flotilla bound for Wales in pursuit of booty. In 972 he ravaged Anglesey; in 980 he helped Cystennin ab Iago in an attack upon the same island, which was directed against Hywel [Howel] ab Ieuaf; in 982 he invaded Dyfed; in 987 he and his Danish host, in a third irruption into Anglesey, won a victory over the Welsh, the fame of which—for a thousand of the enemy were left dead on the field and two thousand carried into captivity—penetrated to Ireland, and was thought worthy to be preserved in the annals of that country."

As we have seen, Llywelyn, having frustrated the attempts of Edwin to seize the throne of Deheubarth, had early made good his right to succeed Maredudd. His conquest of Gwynedd from the pretender who followed Conan ap Howel ap Idwal Ieuaf did not take place, however, until 1018, and five years later he died. For the next sixteen years (1023–1039) we have presented to us the spectacle common in Welsh history of various claimants to the throne fighting furiously among themselves. In the north Iago of the house of Rhodri Mawr succeeded in asserting his rightful claim, and seems to have ruled in peace until 1039, when, as we shall see, he was succeeded by Gruffydd ap Llywelyn. In the south there was continuous conflict between the families of Edwin, Seisyll, and Rhydderch. In 1027 Conan ap Seisyll was killed. Six years later Rhydderch ap Iestyn, who had usurped the princely power, was slain by the Scots, and Howel and Maredudd, sons of Edwin, ruled over Deheubarth. In 1032 we find the battle of Hiraethwg taking place between these two princes and the descendants of Rhydderch, and in the year following Maredudd was killed by the sons of Conan, and Caradog ap Rhydderch was put to death by the Saxons. Matters were, indeed, drifting toward anarchy when Gruffydd made good his claim to Gwynedd in 1039. With the entry of this prince on the stage of our history we have to deal with events of greater importance than have occupied us for some time.

# CHAPTER X

## GRUFFYDD AP LLYWELYN

(1039 1–1063)

GRUFFYDD AP LLYWELYN, a descendant of Roderick the Great, came on his mother's side from the royal house of Deheubarth. His father, Llywelyn ap Seisyll, was not improbably a Prince of Powys before he succeeded in making good his claim to Deheubarth and Gwynedd. On the death of Llywelyn, who had no hereditary claim to either Deheubarth or Gwynedd, we find both those principalities returning to descendants of the ancient houses. In the north, as we have seen, Iago, a great-grandson of Idwal Voel, was chosen as prince. In the south, after the death of Rhydderch, Deheubarth was divided between Howel and Maredudd, the two elder sons of Edwin ap Einion.

Gruffydd's first step to greatness was taken over the corpse of Iago, who, in 1039, was murdered by his own men, as some say. Since there is nothing in Iago's reign to lead one to expect such a heinous crime (treachery to a man of one's kin was looked upon with the utmost loathing and contempt), the account given of his death in the *Chronicles of the Princes* and the *Annales Cambriae* seems to us more probable. There we read that Iestyn ap Gwrgant, having ravished Gruffydd's cousin, Ardden vz Robert ap Seisyll, fled to Iago, who gave him his protection. Gruffydd was of all men then living about the very last to tolerate such an insult. A man of fiery passions himself, he was capable of slaying a husband to seize

[1] Our authorities for the dates in this reign are Lloyd's *History of Wales* and Plummer's *Saxon Chronicles*. There is reason to believe that the dates given in the *Brut y Tywysogion* are a year or two too early.

the wife—as he did two years later—but he would be the first to resent such an action on the part of another. Violent, cruel, jealous, and passionate, he was at the same time brave, politic, and a great believer in his own dignity. The story is told [1] of how Gruffydd and Edward the Confessor when about to meet to settle a treaty of peace found themselves on opposite banks of the Severn. Neither would cross first, since to do so would be to acknowledge inferiority. We pause to point out that Gruffydd was here overstraining his dignity. Edward finally grew tired of the senseless delay and commenced to cross. Gruffydd, who must have known that precedence lay with Edward, completely overwhelmed by his opponent's courtesy, plunged into the stream, and on reaching the boat carrying the English king embraced it and carried its royal burden to shore on his shoulders.

A man of this proud nature was not one to tolerate dishonour to a lady of his house. We therefore read of his marshalling an army, attacking Iago, defeating and slaying him, and seizing his territory. Thus once more in the tale of history a state was lost and won because of a woman's looks and a man's folly.

This occurred about 1039. Gruffydd was now Prince of Powys and Gwynedd. He had, therefore, the whole of north and north-east and central Wales under his control, and he appears to have felt himself strong enough to tilt at the Saxons. In the same year he surprised and attacked the Mercian army near Welshpool (Rhyd y Groes, on the Severn, was the actual place of combat). The defeat thus inflicted seems to have been an important one. It would appear from the nature of the entry in the *Brut* that this campaign was connected with some earlier offensive movements against Deheubarth, and that the South Wales men had called in Mercian aid. Of this we cannot speak with confidence, but we find Gruffydd after the battle of Rhyd y Groes " depopulating " Llanbadarn and driving Howel, king of Deheubarth, from his realm. This Howel had been left as sole king of Deheubarth

[1] Walter Map is responsible for this tale.

by the early death of his younger brother, Maredudd, in 1035. For the next few years Gruffydd was engaged in bringing about his complete overthrow.

In 1041 Gruffydd's third great battle was fought at Pen Cadeir, or Pencader. Howel was defeated. We read that Gruffydd seized his rival's wife "and took her as his wife." This lady, who, according to Walter Map, was most delightfully beautiful,[1] was not yet a widow. Howel, though defeated, was still alive and still had command over certain parts of his possessions. In 1042 we find him (Howel) beating back the Danes at Pwll Dyfach, near Caermarthen. Soon afterward he appears to have found it necessary to fly from his native land. In 1044, however, we read of his returning to Deheubarth, "accompanied by a fleet of the people of Ireland." These auxiliaries had evidently been raised to enable him to recover from Gruffydd the prizes he had won. The two met in battle at Aber Tywi, and Howel was slain.

### Struggle for Deheubarth

Gruffydd was now master of practically the whole of Wales. He was not, however, allowed to remain long in peaceful enjoyment of Deheubarth.

It will perhaps be remembered that one of the successful usurpers of the throne of Deheubarth was Rhydderch ap Iestyn. He had been killed in battle about 1033, and it was then that the succession reverted to the line of Roderick in the persons of Howel and Maredudd. Maredudd, as we have seen, died soon afterward.

Although Rhydderch was slain in 1033, his line was by no means exterminated. With the death of Howel we find Gruffydd ap Rhydderch laying claim to the principality which had been his father's. The two Gruffydds were now in open opposition. Local feeling seems to have been on the side of the son of Rhydderch. At least we find Gruffydd ap Llywelyn so hard pressed that in 1046 he called in Saxon aid in the person of Earl Sweyn. Peace followed, though the new

[1] Map may have been referring to Gruffydd's later bride.

claimant was by no means disposed of. In the next year Gruffydd ap Llywelyn was surprised and all but captured and slain by the chiefs of Ystrad Tywi. He replied by devastating Ystrad Tywi and Dyfed.

Although this looks as if Gruffydd ap Llywelyn had the better of the conflict, it would seem that he must have suffered some serious reverse of which we know nothing. It is clear that for many years it was Gruffydd ap Rhydderch and not Llywelyn's son who ruled over Deheubarth. Gruffydd ap Rhydderch seems, indeed, to have played the part of prince with intelligence, if not with nobility. We find him deflecting the Danish raids from his own coast to the nearest English towns. We may even suspect him of taking a hand in the plundering of his Saxon neighbours.

In 1052 Gruffydd ap Llywelyn reappears on the scene. In the intervening years important events had taken place on the eastern boundaries of Wales. Earl Sweyn had been driven from Hereford, and his place had been taken by Ralph, Edward the Confessor's nephew. With him many important Normans had come (Ralph was of Norman birth on his father's side), and Norman castles were beginning to spring up. Gruffydd no doubt viewed with anger this presence of a new and powerful group of nobles. We find him about 1052 indulging in a raid upon Herefordshire. Nothing important came of this expedition, but it was in truth the commencement of the long struggle against the Norman marcher lords.[1] The Normans were at first defeated. In a battle fought at Leominster Gruffydd was victorious. A few years hence he was to win a far more signal victory over the new-comers.

From the return of Gruffydd to his people, loaded with spoil as the result of this successful foray, we may date the commencement of the struggle which was to make Gruffydd one of the most dangerous of Earl Harold's many opponents and render necessary, in subsequent years, the combination

[1] Of course the serious struggle did not commence until after the Norman Conquest.

of many forces before the brave Welsh chieftain was at last laid low.

### Gruffydd Supreme in Wales

In 1055 Gruffydd's power was further strengthened by the overthrow of Gruffydd ap Rhydderch. This gave him Deheubarth, and not improbably Gwent also. Thus we now find him truly Prince of Wales. His position was for another reason stronger than that of any previous British chieftain since the days of Cadwallawn, perhaps we should say since the time of the Romans. He was fortunate in having for his eastern neighbour an earl who was at once powerful and in need of an ally. Leofric of Mercia, the husband of the famous Lady Godiva, had quarrelled with the house of Earl Godwine, now represented by Harold, who was becoming the most powerful earl in England. Earl Godwine had, as is well known, been banished, and on his fall Aelfgar, son of Earl Leofric, was given the East Anglian earldom. With the return to power of Godwine's son a natural enmity arose between the families of the possessor and the dispossessed, which was not healed by the surrender by Aelfgar of the forfeited earldom. Shortly after Harold became Earl of Wessex we find Aelfgar accused of treason and outlawed.

This was in 1055, the same year that saw Gruffydd prince of all Wales. It was not entirely unnatural, despite the ancient rivalry between Mercian and Welshman, for Aelfgar in this time of need to turn for help to his western neighbour. Nor did he content himself with this alone, for we find him also seeking aid from the Danes. The combination thus formed must have been a very strong one, and in the result it would appear that the Welsh prince was far from being the weakest of the allies.

The first and final adventure of the combined forces was the attack upon Hereford, an attack so boldly conceived, so admirably carried out, and so convincing in its result that almost without a further struggle peace was made, Aelfgar being restored and much land granted to Gruffydd.

The combatants at the fight at Hereford were Gruffydd and Earl Aelfgar on the one side, and Earl Ralph, son of the Count of Vexin and nephew to King Edward, on the other. The allies marched to the plunder of Hereford ; they were met about two miles outside the city by the Norman earl. The actual combat appears to have been of short duration. Earl Ralph and his men were scattered ; their lines were entirely broken, and the allies rushed the city, capturing the castle by a surprise attack with very little difficulty. Hereford itself, including its cathedral, was fired, after the allies had removed such valuables as they cared to carry away.

This was a serious blow struck against the prestige and dignity of the English king. Some small attempt was made to send a punitive force against Wales. It was totally unsuccessful, and the year was too far advanced for a lengthy campaign. Peace was therefore patched up, as we have already stated—a peace which from its nature and from the place of meeting may be called the Truce of Billingsley.

As soon as the winter was over this truce was torn up, and the English are found attacking Gruffydd. The leader of the invading force was Bishop Leofgar, who was doubtless anxious to avenge the burning of Hereford Cathedral and the murder of its seven canons. The bishop seems to have been more of a soldier than a cleric, but, unfortunately for him and his army, less of a soldier than was Gruffydd. The armies met on June 16, 1056, and the result was once again a decisive victory for the Welsh prince. The bishop was slain and his army retreated in disorder. Again an attempt was made to send an effective punitive expedition against Gruffydd ; again it failed, and again peace was made.

In the following year Gruffydd's ally, Aelfgar, succeeded his father as Earl of Mercia, and we find Gruffydd strengthening the ties which bound them together by his marriage with the Lady Godiva's beautiful granddaughter, Ealdgyth, daughter of Aelfgar.[1]

Gruffydd's next military move would appear to have been

[1] This is perhaps the lady of whom Map speaks in such glowing terms.

in 1058. In the *Brut* we read that in that year [1] "Magnus, son of Harold, King of Germany, came to England and ravaged the dominions of the Saxons, Gruffydd aiding him as conductor and auxiliary." This was Magnus, son of Harold Hardrada of Norway. The confederation probably took place in order to give aid a second time to Aelfgar.

### Gruffydd's Decline in Power

In 1062 Earl Aelfgar died. With his death Gruffydd became once more open to attack from Mercia. Aelfgar's successor, who was a youth, seems to have been unable to render the aid given by his father. Consequently from the death of the Mercian earl we must date the commencement of Gruffydd's decline. The downward path once taken, Gruffydd's descent was swift. His death was a sorry ending to a vigorous career, for he was slain by his own men in the year following.

The events which led up to this miserable end centre around Earl Harold. He seems to have regarded Gruffydd with peculiar malignity, so that we find him in 1063 planning the surprise and murder of the Welsh prince in his own palace at Rhuddlan. The move was certainly a bold one. Harold's purpose was to push right through North Wales from Chester with a small bodyguard in order to catch his enemy unprepared. The attempt failed in its main purpose. Gruffydd escaped by sea; but his palace was burnt, almost about his ears, and the adventure must have destroyed his prestige to a very large degree.

Harold was not, however, content with the burning of his rival's house or with the reduction of his rival's fame. He had clearly determined that Gruffydd and peace could not live together. For the purpose of bringing about the downfall of his enemy we find Harold arranging with Tostig, Earl of Northumberland, a large and well-developed scheme for the invasion of Wales and the final overthrow of Gruffydd. Tostig was to advance from the north, probably by way of Chester,

[1] In the *Brut* and *Annales Cambriae* the entry is under date 1056. These dates, as we have said, are a year or two in arrear.

while Harold collected his men at Bristol. Both armies mainly consisted of light cavalry—the type of military force best suited for campaigning in a country where rapid movement over difficult ground was essential to success. With the appearance of this formidable army at its gates the men of Wales showed their old weakness. We strongly suspect that most of these disputes were quarrels which interested and affected the ruling houses only, and did not touch very closely the people of Wales. However this may be, we find the men of Deheubarth seceding. They made terms with Harold and renounced their allegiance to Gruffydd. In justice to the Welsh race it must be remembered that Gruffydd was Prince of Deheubarth, not by right, but by force.

This loss of about one-third of his supporters was a great blow to the Welsh leader. We find Harold harassing the whole of North Wales, driving Gruffydd from one place of refuge to another, and ravaging, without doubt, the country through which he had to pass. The men of North Wales, so proud of their leader in the days of his prosperity, so ready to acclaim him with shouts of triumph when he led them to victory and returned with them loaded with the sack of the cities he had reduced, now, in the time of his need, basely deserted him. He was murdered by his own followers, and his head was sent to Harold as a peace-offering. Thus, in the words of the chronicler, "Gruffydd ap Llywelyn, the head and shield and defender of the Britons, fell through the treachery of his own men. The man who had been hitherto invincible was now left in the glens of desolation."

## Results of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn's Reign

In estimating the importance of Gruffydd's reign, one of the best tests to take is the amount of territory which he succeeded in recovering for his country. From this point of view the results of Gruffydd's many victories have been most admirably stated by Professor Lloyd, from whose history we again intend to quote. Thus he says:[1] "Rhuddlan on the

[1] Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. ii, p. 366.

Clywd, which had once been held by the Earls of Mercia, was in 1063 a royal seat of Gruffydd's. . . . The whole country from here to the vale of Maelor, as far as Wat's Dyke to the east, had been cleared by Gruffydd of its English settlers, who no longer tilled the fields of Preston (Prestatyn), Merton (Mertyn), Whitford, Bruncot (Broncoed), and Hope. At Bishopstree (Bistre) he had another residence, to which his vassals in the region of the Alun brought their dues of beer, butter, and the like. The Maelor district had for many years formed the English hundred of Exestan, and in 958 King Edgar of Mercia is recorded to have bestowed upon St. Werburgh's Abbey, Chester, the hamlet of Hodeshlith (Hoseley) within its bounds. But under Edward the Confessor the whole of this fertile plain, in which 'ham' and 'ford' and 'stock' bear witness to an English settlement of long standing, was in the hands of Gruffydd; it had, indeed, been formally bestowed upon him by Edward, it may be in 1055, but in any case as the recognition of an accomplished fact. Almost the whole hundred of Mersete, lying around Oswestry, was in the like case, and one learns that the English loss was recent from the statement made in Domesday that Whittington, Maesbury, and Chirbury, which in 1066 yielded no revenue whatever to the Crown, had between them furnished half a [k]night's ferm in the days of Ethelred. The Severn was still the boundary between the two races from Melverley to Leighton, but further south evidence of the aggression of Gruffydd is again forthcoming. Not only Chirbury, but a score of villages round about, where the English system of hidage had been in full force, had been rendered uninhabitable, and, instead of fifty hides paying the king's taxes, there was nothing but a great forest. Along the Herefordshire border, signs of the activity of Gruffydd are, as might be expected, everywhere visible. A line drawn from Brampton Bryan on the Teme to Willersley on the Wye would roughly indicate the western limit of English occupation at this time; all the English villages between this and Radnor Forest—Knighton, Radnor, Kington, Huntington, and a score of others—had been abandoned to the

PLATE XXXI. THE WATER TOWER AND WALLS, CHESTER

*Photo Frith*

Welsh, largely, no doubt, as the result of the raid of 1052. South of the Wye, again, the country bore vivid witness to the work of 1055; only a few villages lining the south bank of the river are entered in Domesday as yielding an income to English lords under the Confessor, and of Archenfield or Erging as a whole it is said that, though at one time paying rent and service to the English king, it had been so devastated by Gruffydd and his successor, Bleddyn, as to be of no value to the Crown in 1066."

It will therefore be seen that Gruffydd's campaigns were something more than mere border forays, and that from the extent of his gains he could not have been the most insignificant of the allies—Welsh, Mercian, and Norse—who proved such particularly sharp thorns in the side of Harold.

There was another great gift he gave his countrymen besides territory. For centuries Wales had been so torn by civil war, by foreign attacks, and by piratical raids that she was well-nigh losing her self-esteem and self-respect. No nation can live for ever by fighting and at the same time retain the arts and graces of peace. No people can be for ever oppressed, either by a foreign enemy, or by religious intolerance, or physical compulsion, or poverty, and retain the national spirit which is necessary before a collection of human beings can call itself a nation. So it was with Wales. The signs were not wanting that a break-up was imminent. Her poetry had gone. Her kings had gone. Her princes were furiously squabbling one with another. Her priests had lost their grip on her rulers. A Welsh prince could join with pagan pirate in plundering his neighbours. Her most fertile lands, once ravaged, remained deserted. Civil war was becoming almost perpetual.

All that was, for the time being, altered by Gruffydd. He was a strong man and an able soldier. He united the various principalities once more, and he showed the Welsh that with the aid of an intelligent foreign policy they were still a nation capable of united action, capable of dealing shrewd blows that made it necessary for the English king to have a care how Wales was treated. In the years to come the spirit he had instilled

into his countrymen was not able to save Wales from conquest —geographically her eventual absorption by England was inevitable—but it enabled her to make a magnificent struggle for her freedom, and it gave back to her poets the gift of song, so that to-day we can read of the doings of her princes in the years which follow on the commencement of the Norman Conquest. The bad old period of silent, listless apathy is gone. For the years which follow we have to treat of many battles, of many deaths, of much misery, but the tale is not so squalid as heretofore. The period we have passed has been an ugly one of internecine strife. We now turn to an era which has many grim doings belonging to it, but no longer does civil war well-nigh monopolize the story as told in the chronicles. For a few years after the break-up consequent upon the death of Gruffydd many struggles take place between Welshman and Welshman, but, finally and after the inevitable relapse, the national spirit becomes more evident and more permanent. We have at last a nation fighting against a national enemy, and that at least lifts the story to a higher plane and makes the very wars themselves more glorious.

# CHAPTER XI

## FROM THE DEATH OF GRUFFYDD AP LLYWELYN TO THE DEATH OF OWAIN OF POWYS

(1063–1116)

WITH the death of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn we find Wales again broken up into a number of fragments, each controlled, from time to time, by its own particular prince, or princes, or claimants, who found it necessary, apparently, to fight continually one with another in support of their claims or pretensions.

The campaign of Harold would seem to have had far-reaching effects and to have reduced the Welsh polity from one of some sort of coherence to a mere congregation of hostile tribal lordlings, each having but few ideas beyond his own selfish interests, or the planning of occasional acts of violence and plunder. As a consequence the history of Wales for the next few years is petty, and the parts played by its ruling princes, with but one exception, none too noble.

Before we pass to a consideration of these Welsh chieftains it is desirable to consider the steps which were taken by the enemies of Wales to secure the fruits of Harold's victories.

Harold himself was, as we might expect, the first to follow up his triumphs. Some two years after the death of Gruffydd we find him again in Gwent. Apparently he was not opposed, and it may be that the expedition was one of pleasure. We find him ordering the building of a hunting-lodge at Portskewet —so satisfied was he that his enemies were quite subdued. The result showed how mistaken he was in so thinking; and indeed he must have been of a singularly sanguine temperament

or have known little of his enemy who thought the Welsh could be subdued in one campaign. No Saxon house at that time that was not fully guarded by moat and mound and palisade was, if within the borders of Wales, safe from the danger of being plundered by the Welsh.

It happened as one might have expected. While the builders were busy constructing this summer retreat, Caradog, Prince of Gwynllwg and Gwent, swooped down from the hills, murdered the builders, and carried off everything that was portable. Such raids were, of course, of constant occurrence. Later, when we come to the unhappy reign of Iorwerth, we shall find Owain and Madog leading regular bands of free-booters, who lived entirely on deeds of violence directed against anyone, Norman or Welshman, who had property to lose.

### The Normans

With the coming of Duke William and his Norman followers the position was somewhat altered. We now enter upon the first really organized attempt to capture the whole of the land of Wales and to subdue completely the inhabitants. It was a struggle which continued intermittently until the final conquest of Wales. It was, be it observed, a struggle between Norman lords and Welsh princes rather than between Normans and Welshmen. A consideration of legal documents and extents shows that the under-tenant, the tiller of the soil, the peasant, lost little by the change. The dues paid by tenant to lord remained the same as before. Their holdings were to a large extent undisturbed. The change lay in the fact that the lord was Norman Ralph or Richard instead of Welsh Gruffydd or Owain. Even the tribal system of land-holding lived on; but the tribal chief looked to a Norman rather than a Welsh overlord. These facts should be borne in mind in order that the nature of the struggle which lies ahead may be appreciated.

At the outset of our description of the struggle with the Norman marcher lords it is desirable to state shortly the

system adopted. Wales had on its eastern border three important towns, which were the keys to the military position as regards North, East, and South Wales respectively. These towns, Chester, Shrewsbury, and Hereford, were each placed by William in charge of an important Norman baron. Thus Chester was given to Hugh the Fat, son of Richard of Avranches. Around him were his men, among them Robert, later of Rhuddlan, one of his trustiest lieutenants, to whom was given in time the honourable but dangerous duty of acting the part of castellan to Rhuddlan Castle. Robert fitz Hugh, of Malpas, and William Malbanc of Nantwich were other under-tenants who held important estates round Chester with the duty of keeping them safe.

At Shrewsbury was placed the great Roger Montgomery, founder of a famous house, a personal friend of Duke William, and one of the leaders of the invasion. Around him were placed as under-lords Ralph Mortimer, founder of a still more famous line, Warin the Bald, William Pantulf of Corbet, and Robert of Sai. Descendants of these still hold broad acres in Shropshire and on the borders.

At Hereford we find William fitz Osbern, lord of Breteuil, a relative of William. He too had around him friends and retainers. His knights it was who built castles at Monmouth, Wigmore, Clifford, and Ewias Harold.

These, then, were the men who commenced the castling of Wales, which in course of time at last overcame that stubborn resistance which the Britons at all times made when their liberty or their lands were threatened with conquest. Some have portrayed them as men licentious and cruel almost past belief, delighting in torture and murder. To say so is to hold the balance unfairly. They were men of high passions and courage, equally careless of their own lives and those of their enemies—as civilized at least as the Welsh, who offer to history the spectacle of a prince blinding his brother to seize his inheritance, and of a leader of men holding back with the sharp spears of his retainers one whom every sentiment of loyalty should have made him reverence, so that he dropped,

burnt and lifeless, in the fiery ruins from which he was endeavouring to escape. The times were savage, and the men on both sides were fitted to the period in which they lived.

The most considerable advance in the occupation of Wales by the marcher lords was made at first by William fitz Osbern. But before either he or the leaders in Chester and Shrewsbury were free to pursue their campaigns against the Welsh it was necessary to deal with the equally hostile forces of Mercia. Thus in 1067 we find Bleddyn and Rhiwallon joining forces with Eadric, an important Mercian lord. They jointly attacked Hereford Castle itself, but with little result. In the next year we find Eadric and Edwin of Mercia, Morcar of Northumbria, and Bleddyn of Wales combining together. These allies formed a serious opposition of more than border importance, so that King William himself was forced to lead an army against them. Edwin grew frightened and made peace, but the others continued the struggle and attacked Shrewsbury. This was before William had had time to march his army to the scene of battle. In 1070 we find him at Chester, having marched through winter across the Pennines. With his appearance serious resistance was abandoned. Eadric made terms, and Bleddyn returned once more to Wales.

As we shall see later, this Bleddyn became sole prince of Powys and Gwynedd in 1070 as the result of the death of his brother, Rhiwallon. At the same time, or even earlier, Maredudd ap Owain was lord of Deheubarth. The *Brut y Tywysogion* [1] tells us that in 1072 this Maredudd was killed by Caradog ap Gruffydd—who had already distinguished himself by the murder of Harold's workmen—and the French on the banks of the river Rhymney. The French here referred to by the chronicler were the followers of William fitz Osbern, who, as a result of the campaign of that year, would appear to have obtained dominion over the whole of Gwent—a curious result if Caradog was in truth his ally, since Caradog was lord of Gwent.

It is probably about this time that the castles at Monmouth

[1] We give the correct dates. The *Brut* is still behind in its dates.

and Chepstow were built. From these as centres we find William fitz Osbern pushing north and west in an effort to reduce the country lying between the Taff and the Usk. These successes were destined to be the last achieved by fitz Osbern, for in the next year he was slain in battle in Flanders.

Although the old leader was dead the Normans advanced. In 1071 we read of the French ravaging Ceredigion and Dyfed, and again in the year following Ceredigion was made the object of attack. The turn came with the rebellion, or attempted rebellion, of Roger, Earl William's heir, who was discovered in a plot against his royal master. The result was the fall of the house of fitz Osbern and the checking for a time of the Norman occupation of South Wales.

We must now journey north to Roger Montgomery's castle at Shrewsbury. Of the border battles which he fought we have no clear account. Perhaps the most important event was the building of the castle at L'Œuvre—the commencement of the Norman power at Oswestry. There were doubtless many attempts made on Powys. Roger was not the man to sleep while others fought, and we have evidence that certain territorial advantages were gained by the Normans, while other parts which in times past had been recovered by the Welsh from the Mercians were recaptured by the Normans. Thus the district round Chirbury became one of Roger's many manors. He also built the castle of Montgomery.

Yet farther north Fat Hugh of Chester, aided mainly by his trusty lieutenant, Robert of Rhuddlan, was pushing slowly along the North Welsh coast. Castle Rhuddlan, which once had housed Gruffydd ap Llywelyn, had now become a Norman stronghold. Robert had from this centre waged successful war against Gwynedd, so that Rhos and Rhufoniog were in his power and a castle was being built at royal Deganwy. Of the many fights which led to these results we have but few chronicled. It is not to be believed, however, that the Welsh princes saw their rights thus ruthlessly swept away without many an effort made to stem the tide. We do know, however, something of the end of Robert. He had been absent from

his lordship taking part in the disputes which arose on the death of William in 1087, and did not return until 1088. He found that in his absence the Welsh had ravaged his lands. One day in the summer of that year, while asleep after dinner in Deganwy Castle, he was awakened to find the Welsh pillaging the surrounding country—or shall we say recovering their own by way of plunder? Already much cattle and many women and children—these latter destined, probably, for the slave-markets of Ireland—were being hurried on board vessels which lay at anchor in the bay. Realizing that instant action was necessary, and impatient of waiting for the arrival of his hastily summoned retainers, he hastened in pursuit, accompanied only by a solitary knight. Such rash bravery had an inevitable sequel. Unprotected by armour as he was, he made an easy target for the arrows of the Welsh—in later times, and perhaps then, the finest bowmen in the world. Pierced by arrow after arrow, he died on a mountain path leading to the shore. His head was severed from his body, as was usual in the case of a defeated or slaughtered chief in those days, and was carried off in triumph by his enemies.

Robert of Rhuddlan seems to have been a capable, brave, and energetic leader. His death, however, did not stay the Norman forward movement. Hugh the Fat pushed on through Arvon as far as Môn. He built castles at Caernarvon, Bangor, and Aber Lleiniog, in Môn. In 1092 Bangor owned a Breton bishop, and grants were made by Hugh of manors in Rhos and Anglesey.

We must now leave the marcher lords and their doings in order to retrace our steps and give some short account of the Welsh princes who occupy the stage during these early struggles. The first of the native leaders of whom we shall speak is that Bleddyn whom we left returning to his country after the breakdown of the alliance with the Mercians.

### Bleddyn ap Cynvyn

This Bleddyn of whom we are now speaking was the one Welsh prince of the period who showed any real capacity for

governing on the grand scale. The son of Cynvyn, he had earlier made submission to Harold. At that time he shared with his brother the territories of Powys and Gwynedd, and, as we shall see, he was at once capable in time of war and mild and just in time of peace.

One of the first entries in the *Chronicles of the Princes* after the landing of William of Normandy tells us of a battle fought between Bleddyn and Rhiwallon on the one side and Maredudd and Ithel, sons of Gruffydd, on the other. This battle, fought at Mechain in 1070, resulted in the death of both of Gruffydd's sons, Ithel being killed in battle and Maredudd dying of exposure during his flight. On the other side Rhiwallon was also slain, so that as a result of this single engagement we have two of the most formidable of Bleddyn's opponents removed, and Bleddyn left in sole possession of considerable territories extending over North and East Wales. Deheubarth, the third important member of the Welsh principalities, was in the hands of Maredudd ap Owain, grandson of Edwin, and a nephew of that Howel ap Edwin whom Gruffydd had defeated some twenty years before. As we have seen, this Maredudd was also killed in battle some few years afterward by a combination of forces including both Normans and Welsh.

It is always difficult to judge of the merits or demerits of a prince of whom we know so little as Bleddyn. From the few facts we possess concerning him and his reign it is evident, however, that he was superior to most of his contemporaries.

We have seen that he had twice attempted to unite with the more important leaders of the Mercians. The alliances came to little because of the timidity of the Saxons. His position was not made stronger by the fact that he had to cope with insurrection at home, a revolt or rebellion which, as we have seen, was put down by the battle of Mechain. Of his other battles, which were doubtless fought against the Normans, we know but little. It is significant, however, that the house of Montgomery achieved least of all of the three great Norman families during this period. We know that he

was a lawgiver and that he made extensive changes in the laws of Howel Dha relating to Venedotia. Thus he altered the quantities of land assigned to each at the various divisions among heirs, and established an alternative method of obtaining satisfaction from a thief. He seems to have been beloved by his fellow-countrymen, for on his death at the hand of Rhys ap Owain, chief of Ystrad Tywi, " through the deceit of evil-minded chieftains," the chronicler refers to him as " the man who after Gruffydd, his [half] brother, nobly supported the whole kingdom of the Britons." Again we read that he was " the mildest and most merciful of the kings, and [one] who would injure no one unless offended, and when offended, it was against his will that he then avenged the offence. He was gentle to his relatives, and was a defender of the orphans, the helpless, and the widows. [He] was the supporter of the wise, the honour and glory of the churches. . . . Generous to all, terrible in war and amiable in peace."

On his death in 1075 he left as heirs five sons—Madog and Rhiryd, who were both slain in 1088, Cadwgan and Iorwerth, who both survived until 1111, and Maredudd. Rhiryd had a son, Madog, of whom, in conjunction with Cadwgan's son, Owain, we shall have to speak when we come to consider the doings of those two lawless young men. Bleddyn's fifth son, Maredudd, died in 1132, and transmitted the rights of his family to many future generations

### Gruffydd ap Cynan and Trahaearn

The year 1075 brought into prominence another Welsh prince—Gruffydd ap Cynan, half Dane, half Welshman, who in the years to come was destined to wage almost continual war on the Normans. In the year of Bleddyn's death we find Gruffydd directing an attack upon Rhuddlan Castle. The attempt seems to have been but partially successful. The outworks were destroyed, but the keep remained secure. Rhuddlan was still in Norman hands, though despoiled.

PLATE XXXII. RHUDDLAN CASTLE 186

*Photo Frith*

Of this Gruffydd we shall treat at greater length in a subsequent chapter. To interpose an account of his life here would be to destroy what continuity there is in our treatment of these disjointed times.

After the success of 1075 we find his own people revolting against Gruffydd on account of the large number of Irish mercenaries which he kept around him. We read of the men of Lleyn murdering fifty-two of these Irish as they lay sleeping. Gruffydd, alarmed, hastily collected his men and prepared to defend himself. This was in Arvon.

Gruffydd's difficulties gave an opportunity to Trahaearn, chief of Arwystli, who early in 1075 had aspired to the principality of Gwynedd, only to be defeated in the battle of the Bloody Acre. Trahaearn now resolved to wipe out that defeat and make one more attempt to gain Gwynedd for himself. He entered into an alliance with Gwrgeneu ap Seisyll of Powys. The opposing forces met at Bron yr Erw, as the allies were descending from the mountains into the plain of Arvon. Gruffydd's small force was overwhelmed, he himself escaping to Ireland.

The result of this eventful year was at once to raise up Gruffydd to the position of prince and cast him down to the level of an exile. His conqueror, Trahaearn, became ruler of Gwynedd, and remained such until 1081. He seems to have quarrelled with his erstwhile ally, Gwrgeneu, since we find that chieftain acting as guide to the Normans through the mountains of Eryri, with the result that that part of Wales was very thoroughly ravaged.

### Rhys ap Owain

We must now turn for a moment to South Wales. The prince who ruled there about the time of Bleddyn's death was Rhys ap Owain, who had succeeded the Maredudd slain by Caradog. He it was who fought against Bleddyn in the last fatal battle. In 1078 we find Trahaearn leading an army against Rhys and fighting the battle of Pwll Gwdyg, identified with Goodwick, near Fishguard. In this fight we are told that

" all the family of Rhys fell, and he himself became a fugitive, like a timid stag before the hounds, through the thickets and the rocks." There must have been a considerable slaughter among the " family of Rhys," since we find the younger son of a younger branch succeeding him, and this, apparently, without opposition.

Rhys ap Owain we have left as a fugitive after the battle of Goodwick. His death took place later in the same year, he and his brother, Howel, being killed by the same lawless Caradog who had slain Maredudd of Deheubarth. Rhys ap Tewdwr succeeded him, and we find him defending his realm against Caradog.

We now pass to the year 1081. In that year occurred the decisive battle of Carn Mountain, a battle which disposed of Trahaearn and Caradog and established Gruffydd ap Cynan and Rhys ap Tewdwr on the thrones of Gwynedd and Deheubarth respectively. In Powys the sons of Bleddyn were in authority.

We now propose to trace out the events which befell in the reigns of Rhys ap Tewdwr and the sons of Bleddyn. We reserve our account of the life of Gruffydd, as we have said, for a later chapter.

### Rhys ap Tewdwr

Rhys ap Tewdwr was a direct descendant of Howel Dha, being an offshoot of the cadet branch of the house of Einion.[1] He succeeded to the throne of Deheubarth after Rhys and Howel, the sons of Owain—a senior branch of the same family —had been slain by Caradog as above mentioned. It was not long, however, before a rival claimant appeared in the person of that same Caradog. Rhys seems to have been driven from his lands for the time being, according to the story given us in the *Hanes Gruffydd ap Cynan*. We next hear of his joining forces with Gruffydd on that prince's return from Ireland. The allies were completely successful in disposing of their various rivals, Gruffydd getting rid of Trahaearn and Rhys

[1] Einion, it may be remembered, was grandson to Howel Dha.

of Caradog in the great battle of Mynydd Carn.[1] This victory, won in 1081, established Rhys, so far as Welsh rivals were concerned, safely in Deheubarth, but about this time he had to cope with a more serious enemy. It was in this year that William I visited Wales. The goal for which he made was St. David's, but whether it was a pilgrimage, as the *Annales Cambriae* would have us believe, or a military punitive expedition, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* regards it, and as the probabilities incline us to believe, the result was very similar—the Normans saw that South Wales could be subdued and was worth conquering. They commenced to look with covetous eyes upon this part of Wales, and in the later years of Rhys' reign they wrought sad havoc in his principality.

That William visited St. David's shrine is, of course, certain, but that he had other motives is shown by the fact that shortly afterward this part of Wales is found paying land taxes to William to a considerable amount, viz. £40.[2] The years which followed this journey of William are empty of recorded events. During this time it is not improbable that the Norman marchers were slowly consolidating their power and linking up the system of castles or mottes which enabled them in time to subdue well-nigh completely this part of Wales.

On two occasions, however, Rhys had to contend with Welsh rather than Norman enemies. In 1088, as we have seen, Madog and Rhiryd, of Powys, were both slain. This blow to the house of Bleddyn was delivered by Rhys, who, attacked by those princes, was at first overwhelmed and driven to take refuge in Ireland, from whence returning with paid auxiliaries, he reversed the tide of fortune, destroying the hopes of Powys by the slaughter of two of its princes. In 1091 he met an insurrection raised in support of the claims of Gruffydd ap Maredudd, a younger member of a senior branch of the house

[1] Since Gruffydd was the leader and Rhys merely his supporter—and one who took very little part in the battle—we reserve our treatment of this victory until we reach an account of Gruffydd and his times.

[2] We are entirely indebted for this to Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. ii, p. 394.

of Einion, and at the battle of Llandydoch again made good his position by the defeat and death of the pretender.[1]

So far Rhys had been successful in retaining in his hands the right to rule over Deheubarth. In 1093, however, a movement commenced which swept away his power, his life, and the complete independence of South Wales. As we have already said, the Normans had not improbably been slowly consolidating their power in this part of Wales. What exactly led up to the campaign of 1093 is extremely doubtful. Powel, working upon the authority of Caradog of Llancarvan, tells us that Rhys at the battle of Llandydoch already mentioned defeated Llywelyn and Einion.[2] Einion fled to Iestyn of Morgannwg. This chieftain offered his daughter in marriage to Einion, requiring in return that Einion should bring Normans to Iestyn's aid in his quarrel with Rhys. Einion was successful in persuading Robert fitz Hamon, the builder of Cardiff Motte, to join the rebellious Welsh and to bring with him many Norman knights and followers. The allies were victorious: Rhys' territories were ravaged—Rhys, attempting to stay the onward march of the destroyers, met them in battle, but was defeated and slain. The Normans were paid off and returned to their ships. Einion now claimed his promised bride. Iestyn, however, having obtained the revenge he sought, laughed to scorn the hopeful suitor, and Einion, enraged, called back the Normans, despoiled the fertile lands of Dyfed—and received in return the barren and rough places, the Normans taking for themselves the fertile valleys. It is to this conquest that Caradog would have us trace the first important advance made by the Normans into South Wales. It may be taken, however, that these Norman successes were not the work of one short campaign or of one or two battles. Between the years 1091–1093 Brycheiniog was being conquered. Cardiff Motte[3] had already been built. What is probable is that the

[1] It is questionable whether this word can be used in this connexion. To us Gruffydd appears to have a better claim by birth than Rhys.

[2] They were the sons of Cediver of Dyfed, and supporters and inciters of Gruffydd.

[3] The castle proper belongs to a later time.

continual disputes between the various Welsh leaders greatly strengthened the hands of the Normans and enabled them to make advances which, had the Welsh been united, would have been impossible.

### The Powysian Anarchy

Under this title we shall consider the history of Powys from the death of Bleddyn in 1075 to the deaths of Cadwgan and Iorwerth in 1111. Bleddyn appears to have been succeeded by his sons Madog, Rhiryd, Cadwgan, Iorwerth, and eventually Maredudd. Of these Madog and Rhiryd were slain in battle by Rhys ap Tewdwr in 1088, as we have seen. Cadwgan and Iorwerth seem to have been weak rulers, and throughout their reign they were continually harassed by the lawless actions of Madog ap Rhiryd and Owain, Cadwgan's son. In 1093, as we have said, Rhys had been killed by the Normans, who ravaged Dyfed and Ceredigion and fortified many castles. To this period of encroachment we may perhaps assign the attempt at building the castle of Aberhonddu. We next find the Welsh, during the temporary absence of the Normans, destroying Norman castles in Gwynedd, and the Normans retaliating with an attack upon Gwynedd. We find Cadwgan ap Bleddyn resisting the attack successfully. In the same year the Welsh destroyed all the castles in Ceredigion and Dyfed except two—Pembroke and Rhyd y Gors. This expedition was probably led by Cadwgan; and, whether it was a patriotic attempt to break the power of the Normans in the south or a mere plundering expedition, the result was the same for the unhappy population, for we are told that Cadwgan brought away all the people and cattle from Dyfed, leaving Dyfed and Ceredigion a desert.

The next move made by this Prince of Powys was to attack the castle of Pembroke. It does not appear that he succeeded in capturing it, but it was "despoiled" and all its cattle were seized by the Briton. Gerald of Pembroke, the castellan, retaliated by ravaging Menevia. The Normans now made an important move in the north with the object of capturing

Anglesey. Of this we shall treat when we come to the reign of Gruffydd ap Cynan. We find, however, Cadwgan leagued with Gruffydd in opposition to the Normans. The Welsh leaders seem to have had to contend with treachery on the part of their followers, and both Cadwgan and Gruffydd fled to Ireland in fear of their lives. They returned some two years later—that is to say, about 1099. Peace was made with the Normans, largely because of the energy of Gruffydd and the death of Hugh of Chester, as we shall see. Cadwgan now became Prince of Ceredigion and part of Powys, with the consent of Robert of Bellême, now Earl of Shrewsbury, who had succeeded his brother in 1098.

It was this Robert who in 1102, as a sequel to his attempts to create an *imperium in imperio*, was summoned by King Henry to answer the charges of disloyalty which were being made against him. Robert evidently felt unable to explain his conduct, and so we find him in open rebellion, fortifying his castles at Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth, Tickhill in Yorkshire, and Arundel in Sussex. At the same time he entered into an alliance with the sons of Bleddyn, Cadwgan, Iorwerth, and Maredudd. The allies are found pillaging Staffordshire, the Welsh princes conveying the booty to their mountain fastnesses. Robert's brother Arnulf was also a confederate, and he brought with him probably the men of Dyfed and Irish mercenaries. Henry I was not the man to tolerate such a state of affairs, and he hastened to attack Arundel and Tickhill. The reduction of the well-nigh impregnable fortress of Bridgnorth was a far more difficult matter, and a prolonged siege was almost out of the question, since it would have left the whole of the Welsh border at the mercy of the confederates. We find Henry, therefore, resorting to a mixture of bribery and strategy. Through his agent, William Pantulf, he approached Iorwerth, and succeeded in weaning him from the other associates with bright promises of future power. As the chronicler of Llanbadarn Fawr, who was prejudiced in favour of the house of Bleddyn, admits, the king promised Iorwerth more than he could obtain from the earls.

He adds: "the portion he ought to have of the land of the Britons . . . the king gave to Iorwerth ap Bleddyn, whilst the king should live, free, without homage and without payment; and that was Powys and Ceredigion, and the half of Dyfed, as the other half had been given to the son of Baldwin, with the Vale of Tywi and Gower and Cydweli." The offer was sufficient to make Iorwerth a traitor to his brothers and to Robert. He despoiled his ally, and the moral blow which Robert suffered on finding himself thus betrayed resulted in his abandoning what he now realized was a hopeless struggle. The Welsh chronicler throws light on this apparently sudden surrender. Robert was evidently taken completely by surprise, for we read that "the earl had previously commanded trust to be put in the Britons, not imagining that he should experience any opposition from them; and so he had sent all his dairies and cattle and riches amongst the Britons." The writer of the *Brut* seems to have felt that Iorwerth's action needed an apology, for he accuses Robert of folly for so trusting his one-time enemies "without reflecting upon the insults the Britons had received from his father, Roger, and from Hugh, his father's brother, which the Britons kept in mind."

Not only was Robert surprised, but Cadwgan and Maredudd were also ignorant of the change of front for some time. The effect of the defection was, however, very different in the case of the Norman and the Welshmen. Robert surrendered himself to the king's mercy and was banished from the realm. Cadwgan and Maredudd made peace with Iorwerth, and it was agreed that they should share the dominions which Iorwerth fondly hoped would soon be his.

Iorwerth had not, however, yet exhausted his capacity for treachery. Shortly afterward we find him seizing Maredudd and keeping him a close prisoner in the king's prison. In the meantime, of course, Arnulf had been brought down in the ruin which had fallen on the house of Montgomery, and we find Dyfed with the castle of Pembroke surrendered to the king. Iorwerth now probably anticipated the fulfilment of

Henry's generous promises. He was to learn the worthlessness of a promise given to dupe an enemy.

Instead of being lord of South and East Wales, he was cast into prison, "not according to law, but according to power," upon some trumped-up charge. Even before this Henry had partitioned out the promised lands to others. Norman Saer had received Pembroke, while the Vale of Tywi, Gower, and Cydweli were given to Howel ap Goronwy. Powys and Ceredigion had alone been left to be divided between the sons of Bleddyn. With Iorwerth's fall we find Cadwgan in control of those regions.

In the next year Richard fitz Baldwin restored the castle of Rhyd y Gors, which had been demolished, and tightened his hold on Dyfed. Howel ap Goronwy was in the same year driven from his lands, not improbably by the Normans, for we find him pillaging the Vale of Tywi and the district round the castle of Rhyd y Gors. In the year following he was the victim of a base plot which resulted in his death. The story as told us by the compiler of the *Brut y Tywysogion* is worth repeating in the chronicler's own words. There we read that "Gwgawn ap Meurig, the person who was nurturing a son of Howel, and whom of all men he mostly trusted, formed the plot in this wise: Gwgawn called Howel, and invited him into his house, and sent to the castle and called the French to him, and showed them their appointed place, to wait till a certain time in the night. So they came about daybreak, and surrounded the hamlet and the house in which Howel was, and gave a shout; and with that shout Howel promptly awaked, and sought for his arms, and waked and called his companions. And the sword which he had placed on the top of his bed and the spear at his feet had been taken away by Gwgawn, whilst he was asleep. Howel sought for his companions to fight, supposing them to be ready; but they had fled, probably at the first hour of the night; and then he also was compelled to flee. And Gwgawn pursued him warily, till he had taken him, as he had promised. And when Gwgawn's companions came to him they strangled

Howel; and brought him, strangled and almost dead, to the French, who, after cutting off his head, returned to the castle." Thus ended Howel's brief chieftaincy.

On the Norman side Saer, the holder of Pembroke, seems to have offended Henry in some way, for he was relieved of his castle in 1105, the charge being handed over to Gerald, whom we have already mentioned.

### Owain and Nest

Gerald had married into the royal house of Deheubarth, his wife being Nest vz Rhys ap Tewdwr, and we find him extending his power in another direction by building a castle at Little Cenarch. But neither the favour of Henry nor his own territorial rights nor his Welsh connexion could save him from the dishonour which Owain, the son of Cadwgan, heaped upon him in the following year.

It appears that while Cadwgan was feasting his chieftains in the prince's banqueting-hall talk turned after the banquet upon the manifold beauties of face and figure of Nest, the wife of the castellan of Pembroke, known to history as 'the Helen of Wales.' Owain was of the party, and seems to have decided there and then to seize the lady for his own. Collecting a few rash spirits around him, he went to the castle, ostensibly on a visit of courtesy to Nest, who was his kinswoman. Whether this visit was prompted by mere idle curiosity or whether he went to see what plans could be made for the intended abduction we do not know, but shortly afterward we find him coming stealthily by night with some fourteen companions on his daring errand. They appear to have succeeded in evading the vigilance of the guards and to have burrowed under the outer gate, scaled the outer wall, and crossed the moat protecting the castle. Arrived at the castle walls, they raised an alarm of fire, at the same time setting fire to some of the surrounding buildings. In the panic which ensued the castellan's retainers seem to have deserted, Gerald himself being advised by his wife to escape. The bold Owain seized his opportunity, rushed to Nest's apartment, and carried

her off, together with her children, to some stronghold in Ceredigion.

This escapade, though we cannot but recognize the reckless bravery of Owain and his men in storming one of Wales's strongest fortresses with so insignificant a force—and he succeeded in practically destroying the castle by fire—had the obvious result of bringing down the wrath of King Henry, and, in a more personal sense, of Gerald, upon him and his house. For the next few years he and his cousin Madog lived the life of outlaws, and were a sore thorn in the side of Cadwgan and Iorwerth. Both Madog and Owain ultimately lost their lives in the feuds which ensued, Owain falling to the hand of Gerald, whom he had so grievously wronged, and who caught him unawares. But before this happened the two were destined to do many lawless and reckless deeds in Wales.

### Iorwerth's Letter

In 1110 Iorwerth was at last released from prison, after having given hostages to Henry for his good behaviour and having paid a heavy fine for the privilege of being allowed to enter upon his own lands. No sooner had he returned than Owain and Madog began to make his position particularly uncomfortable by their lawlessness. They were at this time what can only be described as the outlawed chiefs of gangs of freebooters. They lived by committing crimes of violence, always accompanied by robbery or cattle-driving. Their energies were directed against the Normans and the English for the most part, but they had to make some Welsh place their stronghold to which the varied plunder which they took could be conveyed. Unluckily for Iorwerth, they chose his part of Powys for their abode. So disturbed was Iorwerth at this that we find him addressing the following letter to his lawless nephews: "God has delivered us into the hands of our enemies, and has brought us down so much that we could accomplish nothing of what might be our wish; it is interdicted to all of us Britons to hold any intercourse with you, in respect of victuals, or drink, or aid, or support; but we must

search and hunt for you in every place, and ultimately deliver you into the hands of the king, to imprison you, or to kill you, or to execute you, or to do unto you whatever he would wish. And specially has it been commanded of me and Cadwgan that we should have no fellowship with you ; for no one can suppose but that a father, or an uncle, must desire the welfare of his sons and his nephews. Therefore, if we have communication with you or in the least go contrary to the command of the king, we shall lose our territory, and shall be imprisoned so that we die, or we shall be killed. Wherefore, I pray you, as a friend, and command you, as your lord, and intercede with you as a relative, that you go not into my territory nor into the territory of Cadwgan any more, nor into the territory of other men about us ; because more causes of displeasure will be sought for against us, as being blameable, than against others." This kindly and sympathetic missive the two outlaws ' treated with contempt.' At last, driven to desperation, Iorwerth pursued them with his men, but not successfully, though we find Owain soon afterward making Ceredigiou his centre, Madog remaining in Powys.

### Owain and Madog

We must now turn back to consider the more immediate results of the abduction of Nest. Though strongly urged by his father to surrender his unlawful prize, the infatuated Owain stubbornly refused to do so. Nest, on her part, seems to have been none too anxious to return, though, it is true, she succeeded in inducing Owain to allow her children to go back to their father—a step which looks as though she contemplated attempting to escape and return. Owain's stubborn refusal to make such amends as were in his power brought down upon him and Cadwgan the Normans, aided by certain Welsh chieftains, including the Madog with whom he was later leagued for some time. Cadwgan and Owain were compelled to flee to Ireland, where Owain remained for a while, though Cadwgan soon returned, and settled on the manor which his wife, who was a Norman and a daughter of Robert of Sai, had

brought him. His lands in Powys and Ceredigion seem to have been given to Madog and his brother Ithel, in return for their aid in driving Owain from the country.

Madog, however, already showed the lawless mettle of which he was made, and so we find both him and his brother being dispossessed of Ceredigion, which was handed back to Cadwgan in return for a heavy fine and a solemn promise to render no aid to Owain.

It was about this time that Owain returned and allied himself with Madog, who had not improbably been driven out of South Powys by Cadwgan, to form the confederacy of which we have spoken. At about the same time, or possibly the year following (Welsh dates for this period are always rather doubtful), Iorwerth was released and reinstated. Possibly he was given Powys when Cadwgan was given Ceredigion. This would account for Madog's attitude.

However this may be, Madog and Owain now enter upon their career of plunder. After Owain had been driven out of Powys by Iorwerth we find him making Ceredigion his centre. From here he harried Dyfed, capturing men, women, and children as well as cattle. The former were doubtless shipped to Ireland for the slave-markets.

When next we hear of the two they are together concerned in the murder of an important Fleming named William of Brabant, whom they waylaid in the highway and slew. At this time Iorwerth and Cadwgan were at King Henry's court. As chance would have it, while the two princes were there the brother of William of Brabant, who was also present, heard the news of the murder. The king was informed, whereupon we read that "he questioned Cadwgan, 'What sayest thou concerning that?' 'I know not, my lord,' replied Cadwgan. Then said the king, 'Since thou canst not protect thy territory against the companions [1] of thy son, to prevent them from killing my men a second time I shall give thy territory to such as will protect it, and thou shalt remain

[1] We must comment on the tact of this speech. The companions were blamed, not the son.

with me under this condition, that thou tread not thy native soil; and I will support thee from my table, until I take counsel concerning thee.'" The king, having taken counsel, seems to have decided to allow Cadwgan one more opportunity. This was not, however, until the year following. In the meantime Cadwgan was allowed 24*d.* a day for his wants, and Ceredigion was granted to Gilbert fitz Richard, who at once took steps to reduce the district to a state of order. We find him building two new castles, one opposite Llanbadarn, close to the efflux of the river Ystwyth and near the modern Aberystwyth, the other at Aberteifi on the site of an earlier castle founded either by Earl Robert or Roger de Lacy.

Madog and Owain seem to have recognized the enormity of their offences and to have deemed it safer to quit Wales for the time being and retire to Ireland. Madog does not appear to have enjoyed himself there very much, for we read of his returning shortly afterward because he could not endure the savage manners of the people. Owain, however, who had had a previous experience of King Murkertagh's court, prolonged his stay for some time.

Madog on his return hastened to re-establish himself in Powys. We read, and we can well believe, that "he was not received either kindly or mercifully by his uncle Iorwerth." We find him, therefore, a fugitive, driven from place to place, ever attempting to hide from his kinsman.

Madog evidently believed that the only way out of a desperate position was the death of Iorwerth. We therefore find him hatching a sufficiently infamous plot to bring about the desired result. In the words of the chronicler, "When Iorwerth returned to Caereinion, Madog, with the assistance of Llywarch's accomplices, made a night attack upon Iorwerth. They set up a shout about the house where Iorwerth resided; and Iorwerth, awakened by the shout, bravely defended the house, aided by his companions. Then Madog set fire to the house about Iorwerth; and when the companions of Iorwerth saw that, they sallied out through the fire, and left Iorwerth in the fire. And he, seeing the house falling, attempted to

get out, and his enemies received him on the points of their spears, greatly burnt, and killed him."

Iorwerth being dead, it became necessary for Henry and his ministers to decide to whom his territory should be given. For some reason which it is difficult to understand, it was decided to grant it to Cadwgan and his son Owain. The latter consequently returned from Ireland and was reconciled to his father.

Cadwgan lived but a short while to benefit from his good fortune. Madog seems to have surprised him in a lonely place near the modern Welshpool, and to have slain him there.

Madog then had the effrontery to claim Cadwgan's lands. He seems to have been granted a small portion, including Caereinion, a third of the commote of Deuddwr, and the tref of Aberriw. The rest, and by far the major portion, went to Owain.

Madog's career was now drawing to a close. In 1113 we find Maredudd ap Bleddyn, Cadwgan's younger brother, who was one of Owain's military leaders (perhaps he held the position of avenger), searching for Madog. He was at last successful in meeting one of Madog's companions, whom he forced by torture to disclose his leader's hiding-place. Maredudd, having succeeded so far, set spies about the place, and in the dawn attacked and caught his enemy, whom he loaded with chains and led captive to Owain. The chronicler adds: "And he took him with pleasure and blinded him, and they divided between them his share of Powys."

In the next year Henry engaged in his first Welsh campaign, directed chiefly against Gruffydd ap Cynan. Owain at first retreated to the hills on the approach of the king, but later, when peace was made between Gruffydd and Henry, he readily submitted. Later he accompanied Henry to Normandy, where he won his spurs. He was killed in the following year while still in the king's service.

Thus ends what we have termed the Powysian anarchy. In a later chapter we shall have to deal with times equally troublous, but with disputes between Briton and Norman rather than between Briton and Briton or father and son.

# CHAPTER XII

## THE WELSH ROMANCES

WE must now break off from the current of our account of the political history of Wales in order to devote some attention to the Welsh romantic literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Throughout this work we have thought fit not to limit ourselves to the recounting of wars and feuds between princes, of political events or the craft of statesmen or politicians. The plan we have adopted has been based on the belief that the history of a nation is, in truth, the history of its people, its manners, its art, its literature. Aristotle said: "Poetry is more philosophical and more worthy of serious regard than history." Were history limited to the recounting of the deeds of princes we could but agree.

With this point of view before us we make no apology for introducing an account of one of the most extraordinary chapters in literary history. Considerations of space forbid any detailed recital of the Arthurian legends or of the fables of the *Mabinogion*, but a few pages at least must be devoted to an account of the development of stories which, spreading out from Wales, influenced the minds and manners of well-nigh the whole of Europe, and, transmuted into gold by the magic of the poets, troubadours, and minnesingers, created that chivalry which was one of the glories of the mediaeval period.

The story of Arthur and his knights, in one form or another, has been found scattered over Wales, Cornwall, Strathclyde, Brittany, France, Iceland, Scandinavia; the Low Countries,[1]

[1] *Morien*, an Arthur story found in early Dutch, but probably translated or taken from the French, has been translated recently by Miss Jessie L. Weston.

and Germany. In later times it became even more widely diffused. Cervantes himself was doubtless satirizing these stories of a forgotten chivalry when he wrote *Don Quixote*. With the Jews they became very popular, and we have preserved to us several Arthurian stories belonging to Hebrew-German literature, as Dr. Leo Landau has told us.

We must now attempt to sketch out quite shortly the origin, or rather what modern authorities think is the origin, of this cycle of stories. We must also trace the steps which led Arthur and his knights, king of Faëry and his courtiers, through the written script of the poet to a wider conquest than even that assigned by Geoffrey of Monmouth to the pseudo-historical sixth-century king.

## The Origin of the Arthur Legends

There are three theories at present in the field concerning the origin of these legends. These theories may be roughly stated as follows: (1) The Arthur legends are a product of nature-worship; (2) they are not of pagan origin; (3) they are the result of a combination of stories, some pagan, some Christian, some belonging to Faëry, some purely romantic, and some partly historical. Thus some believe that the story of the Grail has a Christian origin, but in our opinion Miss Weston has destroyed this theory. It is doubtful, however, whether her explanation of the Grail by connecting it with the ritual of the Adonis cult is altogether acceptable. Miss Weston has spent many years in the study of this fascinating subject, and is so well versed in all its many ramifications that one must, of course, regard her utterances with every respect; but to the present writer it seems that all these stories are of an extremely composite nature, and cannot be traced entirely, or even mainly, to any one source. Thus that Arthur was a culture-hero is probable; it is also probable that he was a fairy king. We have, in other words, to deal with a saga that developed, not in one year, in one mind, in one country, but during centuries, as the result of constant alteration, constant improvement or debasement by many bards, and

with the addition of stories pleasant to the palate of princes in at least three countries—Ireland, Wales, Brittany.

This being so, may it not be that the Arthurian legends are a mixture of stories arising out of the old nature religion and of Faëry stories imported, not improbably, from Ireland, and of folk-stories which have lived in all countries in all ages? If this be so it is necessary to add that Arthur is a hero foreign to Ireland; it is the fairy part so prominent in some of the stories of the *Mabinogion* which is Irish. It must also be understood that the amorous note was never, or but rarely, present in the Irish and Welsh stories. That came from France.

We think it may be taken that the genuine old Arthur stories are connected with nature-worship, and probably with that type of nature-worship called sun-worship. It is possible, and we think probable, that in the first place the tales from which the Arthurian sagas were derived were based on the worship of some culture-hero or some sun-god, whether the Egyptian Arten,[1] the Gaulish Artio or Artius, the Greek Zeus or Adonis, or some other god who had a place in the system of some early polytheistic state. To these ancient stories were added in later times, when the old order of things was passing away and the bards were casting around for some new material which would at once be full of fancy and yet free from the danger of giving offence to their now Christian masters, fairy stories or folk-stories, or pure nature myths based not on the worship, but on the observation and love of the beauties of the field, the hill, the dale, and the swift-flowing river. To these again were added stories of the chase, of combat, of the brave doings of princes—doubtless the master of the bard who was singing. To take an example of stories of this composite character we may cite Kilhwch and Olwen. Here undoubtedly the substratum story was the great boar-hunt. The inner meaning of this legend has been sought after diligently, particularly by Sir John Rhys, who

[1] So far as we know, it has never yet been suggested that Arten and Arthur are connected. In view of what we have said in the earlier chapters of this history, we see no reason why Arthur should be regarded as less akin to Egyptian Arters than to Greek Adonis.

has lavished ingenuity upon its elucidation; but to us it is still an enigma. What is clear is that it is ancient. Nennius knew of it, and it bears every sign of being pre-Roman.[1] Mr. Alfred Nutt believes that the story of the boar-hunt or Twrch Trwyth is prehistoric in the literal sense. To this early tale the later bards seem to have added innumerable fairy stories and tales of chivalry. As Mr. Nutt points out, the story as we have it to-day is fragmentary, but even these fragments are clearly not the produce of one mind or of one age. Around the central core many a tale has been grouped. Some of these are fairy tales concerned with Arthur, king of Faëry.

Thus we see that it is at any rate possible that the Arthur stories are in origin nature stories, to which were added first fairy stories, later tales of bravery, and still later, when the troubadours were singing at the bidding of their royal mistresses, tales of love.

If this be acceptable to the reader, it would seem that, granted these are British stories—and, as we shall see, it is probable that they are—the Arthurian cycle and the *Mabinogion* tales are but developments of ancient Druidic myths originating in the first place as stories woven round natural events, even as the Greeks evolved their wonderful mythology from a poetic consideration of clouds and sunshine, rivers and mountains, and nature generally. According to this theory, as time went on the old nature myths or sun-god myths were, as was natural, identified with some individual man. Why Arthur was the name chosen we do not know. Who Arthur

[1] Reference may be made in this connexion to the reproduction of the sepulchral urn facing this page. This is the urn in which, according to that eminent antiquary Sir R. C. Hoare, "there is every reason to suppose the ashes of Bronwen (White Bosom), the daughter of Llyr, and aunt to the great Caractacus, were deposited." In the tale in the *Mabinogion* entitled *Branwen the Daughter of Llyr*, after Bronwen had died of a broken heart because Ireland and the Island of the Mighty had been desolated, "they made her a four-sided grave, and buried her upon the banks of the Alaw." The place was known before the discovery of this urn as Ynys Bronwen, 'the Islet of Bronwen.' If this urn did indeed hold the ashes of Bronwen it shows that these tales are ancient and are, to some extent at least, woven round actual persons, but a reference to the tale itself will convince the reader that they contain much besides and apart from actual historical happenings.

PLATE XXXIII. THE SEPULCHRAL URN WHICH CONTAINED THE ASHES OF BRONWEN

was, if he lived at all, we do not know, save that the early historians, commencing with Nennius, state that he was Emperor of the Britons. Welsh literature always refers to Arthur the man as *amherawdyr*, or emperor, not *gwledig*, or prince. If this title has its origin in fact, in the actual existence of a man who ruled in Britain, he probably held the office of *Comes Britanniae* in succession to the Roman generals, who, with their legionaries, had left Britain for ever. In an earlier chapter we have considered whether he can be regarded as an actual person. For our present purpose, whether he was or was not is quite immaterial. We treat these legends for the present as myths.[1]

As an illustration of the arguments which have been adduced to prove a 'prehistoric' origin for these stories, we give in outline Sir John Rhys' analysis of the older stories of Arthur and the myth relating to Airem ('the Farmer' or 'Ploughman'), who is represented in Irish story as King of Ireland. Now Airem had a most lovely queen, Étáin ('the Shining One'). So beautiful was she that, like the Venus of the Greeks, she was regarded as perfection, so that to say 'as fair as Étáin' was to reach the limit of praise. But she was no dark beauty. Her loveliness was that of the blonde. She was the lovely Fair Woman.

The third person of importance in the Irish story was Mider. Mider was King of the Fairies. He, like other men, after beholding Étáin fell violently in love with her, and attempted to persuade her to leave Airem and go away with him. Étáin refused at first, but afterward consented, if Mider could win Airem's consent.

The story then relates how Mider played chess with Airem for stakes to be fixed by the winner. At first Mider lost, and was required to do various tasks with the aid of his fairy subjects, but afterward he won, and then demanded from Airem that he should be allowed to put his arms round the queen in the middle of the court and kiss her. Airem would

[1] It will make greatly for clarity of view if the reader, when considering the Arthurian legends, forgets completely that there ever was a British king called Arthur.

not consent at once, but asked for *one month's* time, when his request would be granted.

The month having elapsed, Mider appeared, about *midnight*, looking more comely than he had ever looked. Airem again tried to evade his bargain, but Mider claimed the fruit of his victory, for which he said he had waited a whole year. The queen having consented, Mider put his right arm round her, holding his weapons in his left. The couple then walked out through the astonished witnesses, who, rushing from the hall after them the next moment, could see nothing more of the pair. At last their whereabouts were discovered by a Druid, and the fairy king was compelled to surrender Etáin.

Other parts of the same myth tell us that Etáin was born thrice, seven years intervening between her death and subsequent resurrection.

The similarity between this story and the well-known story of Arthur and Gwenevere is sufficiently obvious. It is stranger if we take the Welsh story of Gwenevere, not in the form given us in Tennyson's romantic *Idylls*, but in the form it probably possessed a thousand years ago. In the older versions we find the queen eloping with Melwas after he had waited for her a whole year. In the Welsh *Triads* Gwenevere seems to have been reborn twice, or to have lived three times in all. This threefold existence was, of course, abandoned when the romancers began to make a king of Arthur and a frail woman of his queen. There are other likenesses to be found in the treble existence of Irish Etáin and Welsh Gwenevere. Both were blondes (*gwen* means ' white '). Both, again, are represented as of great beauty.

Again, that well-known heroine Iseult, or Essyllt, as she appears in the Welsh narratives, is clearly akin to Ailill—Welsh *ellyll*, an elf or demon—who figures in Irish romance. Essyllt, again, has two lives. We read that King Mark and Tristram contended for the love of Isolde—" la beale Isoud." Sometimes one and sometimes the other was successful, so that in the *Triads* we find Essyllt (*i.e.* Isolde) of the White Tresses classified as one of " the three unchaste Ladies of Britain."

At last King Mark drove Tristram away. Then we find him meeting with another Isolde, "Isoud la blaunche Maynys."

There is a further likeness between the Arthur story and the Airem legend. Both Arthur and Airem are derived from words meaning 'I plough.'

It may be remembered that it was to Arthur that Kilhwch looked when required by Yspyddaden to make corn ripen in the space of one day, as well as to have the land ploughed and sown in one day. It is desirable to note here that the Gaulish goddess Artio was similar to the Greek Demeter.

When we look to Scotland we find Wander substituted for Gwenevere. Queen Wander, like the Welsh and Irish beauties, was faithless. The cynic may suggest that nearly all the women of that age were—certainly all the men. The connexion is found in the early English metrical romances, which sometimes give 'Wannore' for 'Gwenevere.' So much does the infidelity of Gwenevere seem to have impressed itself on the Welsh that the name became a term of reproach. Sir John Rhys has reproduced for us the old Welsh rhyme, which he has translated as follows:

> Guinevere Giant Ogurvan's daughter,
> Naughty young, more naughty later.

Of course the Welsh legend knew not Lancelot in connexion with Gwenevere. That part of the story is from the land of the troubadours.[1] But his part of paramour was taken by Modred or Melwas. These tales of naughtiness probably belong to a later age than the story of Airem and Etáin. Anyone reading the latter will be struck by the delicate handling of the elopement. Etáin only consents if her husband permits. Mider is not permitted to touch her without her consent, though her husband has promised Mider that privilege. Their departure is most delicately arranged. In truth, Etáin is much nearer the goddess than is frail Gwenevere. The same changes can, of course, be observed in the myths which centre

[1] Chrétien de Troyes invented this part of the story, though Lancelot himself is the creation of Ulrich von Zatzickhoven, or of the author of Perlesvaus, or perhaps of a still earlier writer.

around Venus. At first a goddess, the symbol of all that was beautiful, as time passes she degenerates into a mere wanton.

If the Airem-Arthur stories are considered carefully, it appears to us that it is possible to see some subtle references to conflicts between light and darkness—possibly the contention between the sun and the moon for possession of the morning star. This is not the view taken by Sir John Rhys, who rather regards Arthur as a culture-hero like the Greek Mercury. He admits, however, that it is possible to regard him as typifying the sun, or it may be the earth. Sir John when treating the central figure as a culture-hero lays considerable stress on the fact that Arthur visited Hades and that Uthr Bendragon, or Pendragon, was one of the names of the King of Hades—the realm from whence all culture is fabled to have come. It may also be remembered that in the story of Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed, Arawn, King of Annwvyn (Hades), changed places with Pwyll for the space of one year, during which time he ruled with the perfection of justice in Pwyll's realm, so that Pwyll's counsellors persuaded him on his return to continue the good government which Arawn had inaugurated.

Whether this is sufficient to show that Arthur was the Welsh Mercury we doubt. It is, however, sufficient to account for Arthur's reputed conquests of Norway, Scotland, and Ireland.[1]

If we regard these stories as having their origin in sun-myths it is interesting to observe that Gwalchmei (English Gawayne, French Gauvain, Scotch Gavin), the Walganus of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who is Arthur's dearest companion, and in a matriarchal state the heir to his realm, is described as growing apace until midday, after which his strength declined as rapidly as it grew. This looks as though he stood for sunshine. His horse was, indeed, likened to the gleam of the sun. Now Gwalchmei's brother was Medrod (English Modred), who is antagonistic to Arthur and Gwalchmei, and attempts to prevent Arthur rescuing Gwenevere. The battle which follows is the great *finale* to the whole story. This battle,

[1] We again repeat that it is improbable that there is any connexion between Arthur the king and Arthur the hero, save in the later developments of the story.

known to the readers of Tennyson as the battle of Camelot, was called in the Welsh stories the battle of Camlan. It sees the death of Medrod and the fatal wounding of Arthur, who had already been deprived, in the struggle at the ford, of his dear companion Gwalchmei. Here again the conflict between light (Gwalchmei) and darkness (Medrod), resulting in the death of light, followed up by a final conflict between darkness and the sun, may, according to some, be seen, though here we must observe that it is contrary to the habit of myths to run completely counter to nature, and it is clear that never in nature were darkness and light both destroyed. As Sir John Rhys has said: "The conquest of the solar hero by the powers of darkness is just what we may expect, and the death of Gwalchmei at the hands of his brother Medrod might be regarded as the close of the incident; but when the culture-hero, the protector and guardian of the solar hero, survives to conquer the representative of darkness and is himself taken off the scene mortally wounded, such is not the proper ending of the myth, and the solar hero should have been brought back in some form or other, as may be seen from the return of Lleu effected by Gwydion's wand."

With regard to these last few words, it is desirable to point out that Gwydion has been regarded as bearing the same relation to Lleu as Arthur to Gwalchmei. His wand was capable of as great marvels as Pharaoh's cane in the Egyptian stories. He it was who, with the help of Math, "by charms and illusions" formed "from the blossoms of the oak, and the blossoms of the broom, and the blossoms of the meadowsweet . . . a maiden, the fairest and most graceful that man ever saw." This maiden, who afterward became the wife of Gwydion's foster-child, had a character which ill assorted with her beauty, for she caused her husband to be turned into an eagle, and, as a punishment, was herself transformed into an owl.

The greatest of the Welsh enchanters was, of course, Myrddin, or Merlin. Of his fabled powers we all have heard. Many have read of how, while yet a child, he brought

discomfiture on Pendragon's court and exposed the goblin builders. It is perhaps not so widely known that he is connected with that Nudd or Lludd whose name exists to-day in 'Ludgate,' derived as it is from the British 'Parth Lludd.' Both Lludd and Merlin were, in origin, not improbably, sky-gods—perhaps sun-gods. Merlin is supposed, according to British tradition, to have descended upon Bardsey Isle, where he remained with his companions, having taken with him the Thirteen Treasures of Britain. It is interesting in this connexion to recall the fact that the Greek grammarian Demetrius, who is believed to have visited Britain in the first century A.D., speaks of a Kronos who, with his attendants, was chained by sleep to an island in the West. Perhaps even then a tale existed based on the descent of the sun every night into the western sea.

Thus it appears that there is some reason to believe that these stories commenced in very ancient times as legends or myths connected with sun- or nature-worship. That the stories so created were vastly modified in subsequent ages, even before they reached the Continent, is certain. The general lines these changes followed we have already mentioned. We now pass on to consider how these Welsh stories spread out all over Western Europe, and how they reached the form known to us at present.

## Dissemination of the Arthur Legends

In dealing with the later history of the Arthurian legends dates are of importance. The *Mabinogion*—which, though it contains many stories which have no reference to Arthur, may yet be regarded, for our present purpose, as the Welsh contribution to the Arthur cycle—comes down to us in a written form which dates from the twelfth century or later.[1] According to Mr. Alfred Nutt, " The redaction of the Four Branches

[1] The *Red Book of Hergest*, from which Lady Charlotte Guest's *Mabinogion* is culled, is of the fourteenth century. An earlier Graal, written in Welsh, is stated by Lady Guest to have been at Hengwrt in her day. It is now in the Welsh National Library. See note to Plate 34, List of Illustrations.

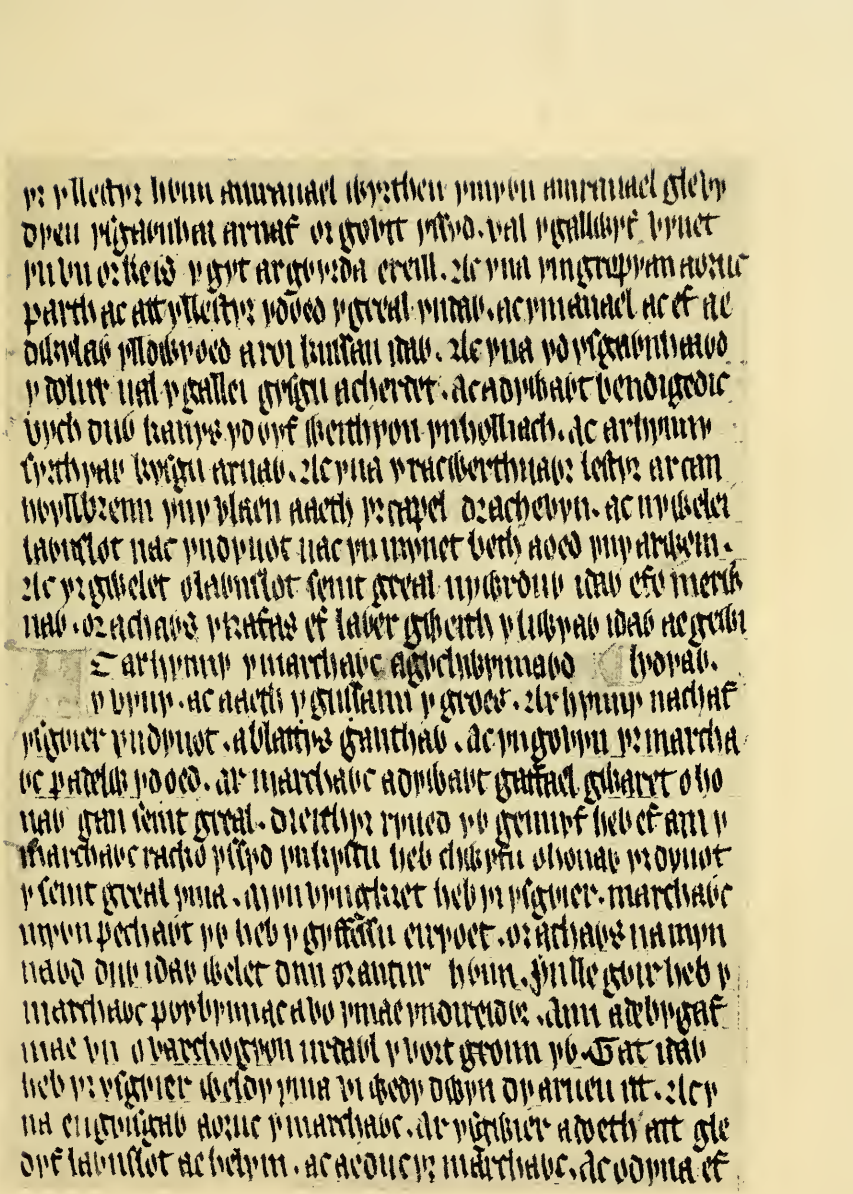


PLATE XXXIV. PAGE FROM "YSTORYAEU SEINT GREAL," THE EARLIEST KNOWN WELSH GRAAL MS. 210

[of the *Mabinogion*] which has come down to us with a certain amount of linguistic modifications, and, perhaps, a few unimportant material modifications, is probably a product and sign of the national movement under Gruffydd ap Cynan (1075–1137) in North Wales, and Rhys ab Tewdwr (*c.* 1070–1093) in South Wales." We may take it, therefore, that the Welsh stories belong to the period of history we have lately been considering, and shall consider further in the next chapter, which is concerned with political history.

Before we pass to a detailed account of the dates and countries of the various poets who were responsible for the spreading of the Arthur stories, it is desirable to point out that this period—the close of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century—synchronized with a sudden development in all branches of native Irish literature. In our opinion it is to this time rather than to any other that we must assign the introduction of the fairy stories and the references to Ireland. As Mr. Nutt says, "We must, . . . I think, regard these Welsh story-tellers to whom we owe Kilhwch and Rhonabwy as men fascinated by the spirit and style of Irish romance, and introducing the same into Welsh literature." Now what Ireland had done for Wales it is fairly clear Wales did for Normandy. As we have already suggested, the Welsh and the Normans were not, apart from the feuds of the nobles, ill-disposed to one another. Even among the nobility there was much intermarrying, and the Norman followers and the Welsh peasants or commoners probably soon got to regard one another, if not with affection, at least with some sort of tolerance; and it is evident that the Welsh story-tellers and bards taught the Normans their old romantic tales of love and daring, and that these tales got a firm hold on the Norman mind, probably not later than the commencement of the twelfth century.

We are now in a position to consider the expansion of the myths through the writings of the Continental troubadours and minnesingers.

The man who is generally credited with the popularizing of

the Arthur stories in Britain is Geoffrey of Monmouth, or Geoffrey ap Arthur. He it was who, purporting to write serious history, gave to the Arthur of Nennius all the attributes of the hero of the legends, and by so doing created a wonderful British king, and in consequence to some extent increased the dignity of the English Crown and turned into life a figure who had previously been but a symbol.

This Geoffrey of Monmouth [1]—who is the very Munchausen of historians—was born about 1100. He admits that his so-called facts are gleaned from another book, which he says was brought from Brittany and translated from the British into the Latin tongue by Walter, Bishop of Oxford. One of the first copiers of Geoffrey was Robert Wace, who published his Anglo-Norman romance of the *Roman de Brut* about 1155. Almost simultaneously, or even it may be a trifle earlier (*c.* 1150), Marie de France, working on more ancient Breton *lais*, was delighting Norman audiences by her Arthur poems. From the form her poems take it is clear, however, that even in her time the heroes of whom she sang were well known to her audience.

The next names which are important are those of Chrétien de Troyes, Robert de Borron, and Layamon—the first two Frenchmen, the last a Saxon.

Chrétien de Troyes is generally regarded as the creator of the Arthur stories as we know them to-day—that is to say, in spirit rather than in detail. With him came the love interest, the lovelorn knights, the frailty of the heroes. The one-time perfect Gawaine—the knight without reproach—no longer is pictured as perfect. He has commenced the descent which resulted in his becoming eventually, as Miss Weston expresses it, "a hardened reprobate, immoral, reckless, irreverent, inferior not only to Galahad or Perceval, but to the knights of later invention, and of Lancelot's family, Bors and Hector." Chrétien, however, had a lively pen, and although he seems to have known that he was departing from the ancient standards, he was successful in making of Arthur and his knights human heroes who appealed to the great

[1] See pp. 290–293 for a further account of his life.

world and in investing the stories woven round their names with an interest which made these tales popular throughout Western Europe.

One of Chrétien's most ambitious stories was left unfinished by him. This tale, a *conte del Graal,* was, however, completed by others, viz. Wauchier de Denain, Manessier (both of whom were in the service of Jeanne of Flanders), and Gerbert de Montreuil. Concerning the unequal and conflicting results we need not speak. What has an interest for us is that Wauchier specifically states that he used as his authority for the Gawaine stories the Welshman Bleheris (who appears as Master Blihis in a fragmentary text called *Elucidation,* where he seems to have been regarded as the author of a tale dealing with a sevenfold quest of the Grail). This Bleheris is doubtless the "famous story-teller" whose name is given as Bledhericus by Giraldus Cambrensis and as Bréris by Thomas of Brittany. It would seem, therefore, that Chrétien and his co-workers were using Breton and Welsh sources. It is probable that Gaimar, the translator of Geoffrey, who was working on the Arthur stories in the middle of the twelfth century, also had access to Welsh authorities.

In the meantime—*i.e.* at least before Chrétien's death—the hero Lanzelet had been created. Who the creator was is not clear. An early story called *Perlesvaus,* by an unknown writer, contains a Lancelot, and Marie de France has a story about Lanval. The German Ulrich von Zatzickhoven is, however, generally credited with the creation of that Lanzelet who was the pattern for the great Lancelot du Lac of the later Chrétien de Troyes.

It was another German, Wolfram von Eschenbach, who developed the story of Perceval, or Parsifal. Wolfram tells us that this story of the Graal was based on a work by Kiot the Provençal, who had in turn found it in a manuscript at Toledo written in Arabic by a heathen astronomer, Flegetanis, and that the story of Parsifal was contained in the same manuscript. If this were the true origin it would be impertinent to discuss the story further in this book. As we shall

see, however, there is reason to believe that the legend is Celtic in origin, and although it is possible that Kiot lived and was Wolfram's authority, we can probably dismiss Flegetanis. For our present purpose it is desirable to note that the two kingdoms of Queen Herzeloyde, though located by Wolfram in Spain, are called Waleis and Norgals, and, as Miss Weston points out, these are undoubtedly Wales and North Wales (the "North galis" of Malory), *i.e.* the northern borderland. She adds: "Parzival's title throughout the poem is *der Waleis*, in French versions *le Gallois*, an evident indication of the Celtic origin of the story."

Having now glanced at the men who were responsible for the development of the Arthur stories (and we have stopped our account long before Malory is reached, since the names become very numerous and their work is to a considerable extent mere repetition), we must now consider the questions which have been raised concerning the connexion between the Welsh stories and the Continental tales of Lancelot and Parsifal.

### Lancelot and Peredur

As we have suggested already, the Welsh legends contain no story of Lancelot and Gwenevere. Even on the Continent the story had many variants. If we take the version of the German Ulrich von Zatzickhoven, we find Lanzelet made the son of Pant, King of Genewis, and his queen Clarine. Their subjects having revolted, the king was slain and the queen taken captive. Just before the queen was seized a fairy carried away Lanzelet to her abode in the sea, whence she was called 'the Lady of the Lake,' and Lanzelet—or, to give him his later French spelling, Lancelot—became Lancelot du Lac. This fairy's kingdom was the Land of Maidens.

All this, as Sir John Rhys has told us, is very Celtic. Part of it—the seizing of the baby Lancelot by the fairy ruler of a land of maidens—is known to Irish legend. As for Wales, Peredur takes the place of Lancelot. Many characters in the Welsh stories can be identified with those of the oldest version

of the Lancelot tale. Thus we find Gwyn ap Nudd referring to Bran as the son of Ywerit. Iweret was the giant, the oppressor of Lancelot's fairy foster-mother, who was eventually slain by Lancelot. Again, Mabaz, a prominent character in the German story, looks like the Welsh Mabon, though it is true their characters are depicted very differently.

Lancelot, it may be remembered, married, after the desertion of Ade, the Lady Iblis, daughter of Iweret. It was this Iblis who was granted the Mantle of Chastity at Arthur's court. There is a lady known to Irish legend as Eblieu, and though she was not at all good, her name serves to show the connexion between Iblis and the lady Evilieu, who is placed in the Welsh *Triads* as one of the Three Chaste Women of the Isle of Britain —an enumeration which has always appeared to us to take a too pessimistic view of morals, even in Britain ! In the Welsh account she is not given as the wife of Lancelot or Peredur.

It is interesting to observe that the Lancelot story places Arthur's court at Caradigan. This, of course, is remarkably like Ceredigion, though it has been stated that the word refers, not to Welsh Ceredigion or Cardigan, but to Cornish Cardinham, near Bodmin. In either case Arthur's court is placed among the Brythonic people.

As regards the actual story. The Welsh version of Peredur and Evrawc as given to us by Lady Charlotte Guest in her *Mabinogion* is really not at all like the German version. It is clear, however, that there is a connexion between it and Chrétien de Troyes' early romance (late twelfth century) called *Lancelot.* The commencements are very similar. Sir Kay is early introduced into both. In both he is made to appear as Arthur's most important follower. In both the queen, Gwenevere, is insulted by a stranger knight and carried off ; in the one case, though not in the other, Kay plays an ignoble part, being represented as powerless to avenge the injury done to the queen. In both Arthur is merely represented as some vague figure whom all serve, though for no very obvious reason. In both Gawain (Welsh Gwalchmei) appears as hero, but not as taking the prominent place in avenging the

queen. In both the chief hero is represented as falling into a deep reverie, from which he is awakened by a savage blow from some enemy (Kay in the Welsh story and the Keeper of the Ford in Chrétien's tale) to well-nigh kill his attacker. In both we have a damsel making a highly immodest offer, which, though accepted, is taken no advantage of. In both an anxious father restrains his son from attacking the hero. In both the hero is made to perform a miraculous deed, in the one case reuniting a sword twice after it had been broken by him, in the French version lifting a stone which it would require seven strong men to move. Both stories introduce a game of chess for no very obvious reason. In the French story we also have a reference to the fairy who had taken care of Lancelot during his early years. This was one of the main points of the early German version, but is not present in the Welsh story.

When we come to the main theme there is a wide difference. Peredur was not the lovelorn knight of Chrétien's story. He had no amorous passages with the queen. In nature Peredur is much nearer to Parsifal, the Perceval of Chrétien's story, Perceval the Welshman (le Gallois), with whom he has been identified. But it must be remembered that Chrétien's Lancelot is not the Lancelot of the earlier stories. They make him a hero with no amorous weaknesses. Chrétien seems to have felt that he was forsaking the high ideals of the past, and is careful in his preface to point out that the method of treatment was given him by his royal mistress " my lady of Champagne " (Countess Marie de Champagne, daughter of Louis VII). In the Welsh story Peredur does not seek the queen; he is in search of his own lady. Sir John Rhys has suggested that Chrétien, copying the older story of Peredur, went wrong and mistook Peredur's lady for Arthur's queen. His explanation certainly throws light on the muddled movement of the French romance.

The connexion between Lancelot and Peredur is shown perhaps most strongly by the story of Lancelot and Elaine. Sir Galahad, it will be remembered, was the child of these

two. One naturally inquires what of Guinevere? Of course the story as given us by Malory gets over the difficulty by making it all a mistake, a love plot laid by Elaine and a witch, so that Lancelot became her lover, thinking her to be Guinevere. The truth, doubtless, is that Chrétien started the mistake by mixing up Arthur's queen Guinevere with Peredur's lady Elen. Later writers got the Peredur-Lancelot story more correctly, so that Elen or Elaine again becomes Lancelot's lady. But by now Lancelot was known as the lover of Guinevere, and so the witch stratagem had to be introduced. This does not at all explain why Lancelot went to live with Elaine in the Joyous Island. The Elaine of the Joyous Island probably belongs to a different story from that of Elaine the Fair Maid of Astolat, though Malory runs the two together.

In the Welsh *Triads* Lancelot du Lac is given as the father of Galath or Galahad, one of the three successful searchers for the Holy Grail. Another was Peredur, son of Evrawc, and the third Bort, son of King Bort. This third hero has been identified with Bran. It is interesting to note that Malory introduces a King Brandegore (Bran of Gower) into his version of the Arthur stories, and it will be remembered that his daughter, the fair Helen, had a child whose father was Bors, possibly the Bort of the *Triads*. It is probable that Bors, Lancelot, and Peredur are all variants of the same hero.

Peredur has also been identified with Owain. The likenesses between the two stories, as classified by Sir John Rhys, are somewhat as follows:

(1) The sons of Peredur's host refused to lead him to the Avanc's, or Addanc's, cave.
Owain's host would not aid him to find the Knight of the Fountain.

(2) Peredur and Owain are set on their way to the Avanc's cave and the Knight of the Fountain respectively, the one by a beautiful youth sitting on a mound, the other by a Cyclops (?) sitting on a mound surrounded by wild animals.

(3) Peredur slays the Avanc, being aided by a lady who gives him a stone of invisibility. Owain in his contest with the Black Knight is successful because of the stone of invisibility given him by Lunet.

(4) The lady who gave Peredur the precious stone would marry only the victorious knight of the tournament she arranged. The Lady of the Fountain would only have for her husband a knight who overcame all those who chose to challenge him at the well.

(5) Peredur is successful at the tournament arranged by the Empress, and stays with her fourteen years. Owain marries the Lady of the Well, having slain her husband, the Black Knight, and lives with her for three years.

We add another and leave out Sir John's sixth :

(6) Both Peredur and Owain slay a serpent on a hill.

It is just here that Sir John makes his most interesting point. Peredur kills a serpent and obtains a gold ring ; Owain kills a serpent, and a "pure white lion" whom it was attacking follows him like a greyhound. Sir John has pointed out that in Welsh *lleu* = light and *llew* = lion. The gold ring probably means the sun's disk. There was a Welsh sun-hero, even as Lug was an Irish sun-hero.

The history of the Graal stories we do not propose to consider. It is necessary to add, however, that they probably originated in Britain. Parsifal or Perceval le Gallois was also in essence a Welsh story, being derived from the story of Peredur.

### Historical Values

Many other points worthy of treatment remain, but it is impossible to consider them in one short chapter. One question we must, however, ask and attempt to answer. That is, What is the historical value, if any, of these stories ?

As representations of the actual doings of men it may be said that the Arthur stories have no value whatever. It is

quite impossible to base any historical statement on evidence so doubtful as the imaginative writings of poets. Moreover, it is clear that in many cases the deeds ascribed to the heroes are supernatural, or at least superhuman. Occasionally, no doubt, the story-teller introduces some historical event, but we can only recognize it when we know of the historical happening beforehand.

The Arthur stories are, however, of great interest to the student of history, in the widest sense, from two points of view. First, we have a peep into the everyday life of the times. The love of war, of hunting, of manly exercises; the position of women, their dependence upon their knights, the somewhat unchivalric view present in the Irish and Welsh stories, though not in the French, that love is a folly and a weakness; the pictures of the castles, the hospitality, the tourneys, the games played, the vestments worn, all these have a very great interest for the student of those times. The life depicted was, however, entirely that of the nobles. Hardly a whisper reaches us of the life of the peasant. But we must be thankful for what we have, and it is clear that the earlier Arthur stories are helpful in enabling us to understand the type of mind and the mode of life of the noble of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Secondly, we have a problem presented to us of very great interest, and one which, when it is solved, will, without doubt, affect our view of eleventh- and twelfth-century history. We refer to the development of chivalry. The sparing of a fallen foe, the refusal to take a mean advantage, the generosity to rivals, the protection of women—these ideals had an enormous influence on mediaeval history. It was not until the complete breakdown of this system, not until the bloody and horrible Thirty Years War, when men became devils, who tortured the fallen and outraged the fair, that it was necessary for Huig van Groot [1] to give to the world the first system of International Law. This established law instead of honour as the ultimate arbitrator. Which is the better we leave the philosopher to decide, merely

[1] Better known by his Latin title of Hugo Grotius.

remarking that to-day in Germany a school of publicists exists which openly states that if ever their country were embroiled in a great war it might be necessary to tear up all the weak rules of international law and return to the savagery of the brute.[1] This is where honour and fair play are superior to law—there are no laws to tear up save what not even death can pluck from the heart of man.

It is this creation of chivalry which, as we have said, is one of the great results, or causes, of the Arthurian saga. This spirit of fairness in battle and in love was, we need hardly add, quite foreign to the Greek or Latin mind. It is to the honour of the Celt that it was from him that the great ideal emanated. When it developed, however, is a matter of great uncertainty. There is little in Welsh history of the eleventh century to show that it had during those years any great grip upon the Welsh princes; there is much evidence that it had its effect on their minds in the thirteenth. It is, in our opinion, probable that the poet created the ideal rather than that a social movement created the nobler view of which the poets sang. In other words, the bards were responsible for the movement, and not the movement for the bard's song.

[1] This was written before the outbreak of the great European War.

# CHAPTER XIII

## THE NORMAN CASTLES

IT is quite impossible to understand the later history of Wales without appreciating the immense effect which the castle-builders and their system had upon the people of Wales. The Norman castle was not merely a form of fortification; it was the centre of a social system. Around it turned not merely the warlike acts of knights and men-at-arms, but the prayers of the priests and the bargains of the townsmen. No town existed anywhere in Wales save under the protecting walls of a castle. Many religious foundations, though by no means all, found protection, especially in the early days of the Norman Conquest, near a castle wall. Such justice as existed in Wales during the early feudal times was enforced in the castle courts (or, if the parties were Welsh, in the tribal court). In a word, the castle was the centre of worldly life, even as the monastery was the harbour into which those who had devoted their lives to religion sailed in order to find peace.

In no period is it possible to have law or a law-abiding people without having force either naked or veiled with which to enforce obedience. To-day we are protected in our rights and constrained to perform our public duties by the knowledge that an effective police system can be set in operation to bring our tormentors, or ourselves, before an admirable judiciary, which can and will punish or constrain, and prevent or force the doing or not doing of any particular law or lawlessness. In Wales in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the position was so different that the reader would do well to contrast the two states of things.

In the first place, the King's Peace did not run beyond the high-roads and royal demesnes and certain cities, even in England. In Wales it is probable that in practice the king's writ did not run at all. In other words, it was useless to call upon the offender in the name of the king to appear and show cause, etc. He would not appear; he need not appear.[1]

Again, it must not be imagined that it was always punishable to murder or to steal. It entirely depended (in practice and apart from mere legal theory) upon who was the murderer, the murdered, the thief and the robbed. If a villein murdered a villein belonging to his lord he was tried in the lord's court, condemned, and hung. So with a thief who stole from his lord or his lord's dependent. But who was to complain or try if the lord captured an enemy and gouged out his eyes and chopped off his hands and mutilated him? No one! The only reply was war brought by or on behalf of the wronged one's relatives against the wrongdoer. If the wronged one was a man of no family he could be done anything with by his lord (in practice and quite apart from theory). He could not appeal to anyone; no writ of *Habeas Corpus* existed to aid his relatives to procure his release. Had it existed the king could not, or would not,

[1] The writer is aware that the extreme generality of these and the following remarks may be at variance with that accuracy which history requires. The picture is not painted, however, at random, but after most careful consideration. As to the King's Peace, see Pollock and Maitland's masterly *History of English Law*, vol. i, p. 44. Among the Welsh, local jurisdictions were vested in tribal courts; with the Normans, in seigneurial courts or hundred and shire courts. As to the seigneurial jurisdiction, it depended on the extent of the original grant, but in all cases of great lords included not only *infangantheof*, but *utfangantheof*, giving a very wide power of life and death. Welshmen, unless they had submitted to a Norman lord, had no right of audience in a lord's court, that being reserved to suitors—*i.e.* tenants. On the other hand, the Norman retainer, being a stranger, had no rights in the tribal court. *Ex abundanti cautela*, we have occasionally added "in practice and apart from legal theory" to the remarks which follow, but we are by no means sure that it is necessary to limit the statement in this manner. We have had constantly in view the various police systems present among the Saxons, Normans, and Welsh. The trouble is that all these were based on the unity present among relatives, or citizens or members of the same community. Systems such as *frithborh* or *frank-pledge* broke down when the injured person was a Welshman and the wrongdoer a Norman, or *vice versâ*. The matter is, in our opinion, historically important.

**WALES**

Showing the Sites of the

**CASTLES**

have troubled to enforce it with his army, and his administrative officers, the bailiffs and such-like, would have been impotent. The relatives, apart from having no effective writ which they could sue out, had no court to which to apply and complain. If the relatives were important they could complain to the king's court, they could appeal to the king, they could fight. That, however, is a special case. We are considering the position of a man of ordinary class. Standing alone, such a man was absolutely at the mercy of the lord of the district.

The result was obviously to drive the lesser men into the camp of one lord or another. The ordinary man purchased the right to live, the right to have his wife protected and his children immune from outrage by becoming the 'man' of a lord. He became the lord's tenant, bound to serve him in war, to protect him, to fight for him, to pay suit of court and to submit to the jurisdiction of his lord's court. On the other hand, he obtained some protection. If he were wronged unjustly by another lord, his lord could effectively complain, even as he would complain had another kicked one of his chairs about.

## The Castle

One naturally asks, men being men, why and how did those men called 'lords' obtain such outrageous powers? The answer is, the castle. Protected and safe behind their castle walls, they could, as the writer in the *Acta Sanctorum* puts it, "protect themselves from their foes . . . subdue their equals, and oppress their inferiors." [1] Built in the first place by men who could command labour, either at the sword's point or by gold got from the sale of slaves or the ransoms of captives, the castles enabled their owners to bring to subjection the surrounding neighbourhood. The inhabitants were far more subject to the lord than to the king. The eyes of the

[1] Compare *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*: "Bishop Odo and Earl William remained behind, and wrought castles widely throughout the nation and oppressed poor folk; and ever after that it grew greatly in evil."

great rarely turned to view the wrongs of the little. The lord could do well-nigh what he would with his subjects so long as his injustice were not general. General injustice would result in a state of things dangerous to the castellan himself, and, consequently, was rarely attempted. Moreover, it is to be remembered that the lords were men of family, more cultured than the average man, not without feelings of chivalry and honour. When this personal equation was removed, as at the time of the building of the adulterine castles of Stephen's reign, we see in what crimes power enabled the upstart lords to indulge.

We may perhaps take as an example of the deeds which could be done with impunity in those days the excesses committed by William de Breose in his castle of Abergavenny. It will be remembered that William's uncle, Henry of Hereford, had been slain by the Welsh near Arnold's Castle in 1175. The nephew, planning a revenge, got a large number of Welshmen into his castle of Abergavenny, pretending to have a royal ordinance to deliver relating to the carrying of weapons by travellers. Once there he required them to take an oath not to carry weapons: "That no traveller by the waie amongst them should bear any bow, or other unlawful weapon." Had they sworn they would have become unarmed, defenceless men to be shot at leisure. They refused, whereupon William had them condemned to death and hung. One of these Welshmen was a noble of Gwent, Seisyll ap Dyfnwal. Not content with putting him to death, William sent men to Seisyll's home, captured his wife, slew her child in her arms, and brought her to Abergavenny to carry her sorrow for the death of her husband and her son to the arms of their murderer. It is to be understood that there was no redress sought for or obtainable in law [1] for this grievous wrong. Revenge was obtained, as Giraldus tells us, seven years after the event. As the shrewd Welshman observes, "the sons and grandsons of the deceased, having attained the age of manhood, took advantage of the absence

[1] It is to be understood that we speak of what was possible in practice, and not merely in theory. See further for this incident p. 283.

of the lord of the castle, and, burning with revenge, concealed themselves, with no inconsiderable force, during the night, within the woody fosse of the castle. One of them, named Seisyll ap Eudaf, on the preceding day said rather jocularly to the constable, 'Here will we enter this night,' pointing out a certain angle in the wall where it seemed the lowest. . . . The constable and his household watched all night under arms, till at length, worn out by fatigue, they all retired to rest on the appearance of daylight, upon which the enemy attacked the walls with scaling-ladders, at the very place that had been pointed out. The constable and his wife were taken prisoners, with many others, a few persons only escaping, who had sheltered themselves in the principal tower. With the exception of this stronghold, the enemy violently seized and burned everything; and thus, by the righteous judgment of God, the crime was punished in the very place where it had been committed."

In such a state of society it will readily be understood that castle-building was one of the quickest ways to power,[1] and that around the castle gathered such trade and business enterprise as in those warlike times managed to exist.

With these preliminary remarks we will pass to a short account of the development of castle architecture and of the means taken to attack and reduce the castle when built.

## Castle Architecture

From the very earliest times earthworks as a means of defence had been common in England and Wales. In Shropshire alone a very large number of old earthworks still exist, the most famous being, perhaps, those which were raised on either side of the ridge leading to the summit of the Wrekin. As Oman has said, "Down to the eleventh century it is not too much to say that stonework was the exception, and palisaded earthworks the general rule, in all places where Roman works were not already in existence."

[1] It was not, of course, permitted to every one who wished to build a castle. An unlicensed castle was called 'adulterine,' and was generally razed to the ground by the king.

## The Motte

With regard to the mottes, burhs, or pre-Norman fortified places, there is at present a divergence of opinion among authorities. Perhaps the man who has done most for our knowledge of castle architecture is the late G. T. Clark, who devoted a large part of his life to the consideration of this question, which had previously been somewhat neglected by antiquaries. The result was the publication of his *Mediæval Military Architecture in England*. This work, which appeared in book form in 1884, contained many papers read by him before various learned societies at widely different dates, with the result that there are evident certain contradictions and inelegances.

For our present purpose Mr. Clark's monograph is important because it first launched the theory that the burh and the motte (or moated mound) were identical—that is to say, that the Saxon burh was an early type of fortified place similar in nature and design to the Continental motte. Thus we have Builth Castle (which consisted merely of an earthen mound protected by moats and ditches) assigned to the ninth or early tenth century, and we are informed by him that the Norman marcher lords captured and strengthened many of these ancient fortresses, as, for instance, at Builth, where, we are told, they probably contented themselves with erecting a wooden palisading on the old mound fortress. If we follow Mr. Clark we must say, then, that fortified places similar in nature, though not in architecture, to the Norman castles of a later date existed in England before the Norman Conquest, even before Edward the Confessor's Norman favourites had built their castles at Pentecost or Orleton (the Aureton of Doomsday, and later known as Richard's Castle [1]); that, in other words, Saxons and, apparently, Welsh leaders were throwing up these earthworks to defeat their enemies or tame their own dependents, and that when William came he found a country already well supplied with mottes.

[1] We are indebted to Mr. Round's article in *Archæologia*, vol. lviii (1902), for this.

PLATE XXXV. THE BUILDING OF HASTINGS CASTLE 226

*From the Bayeux Tapestry*

*From "Archæologia," vol. lviii, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London*

Later writers, however, the chief of whom is J. H. Round,[1] have thrown great doubt upon this burh-motte theory, and we may probably assign the whole of the motte-castle-tower building to the Norman period. Even Richard's Castle and Pentecost Castle, which were undoubtedly built on the Welsh border before the Conquest, were raised by Normans in Edward's or Harold's train. They point out that all the old records when dealing with the Norman mottes use words which indicate original construction and not mere adaptation; that where remains of these mottes have been found they are known to have been occupied and fortified by Normans; that in many places where Saxon burhs are known to have been there are no remains of mottes. In view of these and many other arguments, for which reference may be made to Mr. Round's article in *Archæologia*,[2] we may perhaps assume that the motte, equally with the castle, was of Norman or Continental origin, and that before the Norman had introduced moated mounds and castles proper England knew but the ancient earthen ramparts; the Roman camps, now fallen to decay; the *geweorcs*, or fastnesses of banked earth, built mainly by the Danes; and the *burhs* built by the English, and perhaps by the Welsh, to resist the Danish attacks. In other words, the seigneurial fortress, whether motte or castle, was absent from England before the coming of the Normans.

On the other hand, there is evidence to show that the palisaded, moated mound lived on well into the time of Henry I. Giraldus tells us how Arnulph de Montgomery (the younger son of Roger de Montgomery) erected at Pembroke "a slender fortress with stakes and turf, which, on returning to England, he consigned to the care of Giraldus de Windesor [Gerald of Windesor, younger son of Walter fitz Other], his constable and lieutenant-general, a worthy and discreet man."

An excellent description of this type of castle or motte is to be found in the *Acta Sanctorum*. Of this account Oman

[1] He is the leader of the opposition school. Others are Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, Mr. George Neilson, and Mrs. Armitage.

[2] Vol. lviii, pp. 313 *et seq.* He lays some stress on the fact that the Bayeux Tapestry shows the building of a motte-like castle at Hastings.

has said that " the description of this Flemish mound-fortress might serve for that of countless tenth- and eleventh-century strongholds in England " (and, we may add, Wales). We therefore feel justified in giving the description, which is a short one, in full. The passage, translated, runs as follows :

" Bishop John [of Terouanne, in Flanders] had in the town of Merckem a mansion where he could abide with his retinue, while perambulating his diocese. Beside the court of the church there was a stronghold, which we might call a castle or a *municipium*. It was a lofty structure, built, according to the local custom, by the lord of that town many years before. For the rich and noble of that region, being much given to feuds and bloodshed, fortify themselves in order to protect themselves from their foes, and by these strongholds subdue their equals and oppress their inferiors. They heap up a mound as high as they are able, and dig round it as broad a ditch as they can excavate, hollowing it out to a very considerable depth. Round the summit of the mound they construct a palisade of timber, to act as a wall ; it is most firmly compacted together, with towers set in it at intervals in a circle as best can be arranged. Inside the palisade they erect a house, or rather a citadel, which looks down on the whole neighbourhood. No one can enter the place save by a bridge, which starts from the outer edge of the ditch and is carried on piers, built two or three together, gradually rising in height, so that it reaches the flat space on top of the mound and comes in opposite the gate of the palisade."

### The Stone Castle

It was probably not until the reign of Henry I that stone castles became at all common. William I, it is true, had erected a few—*e.g.* the Tower of London—in unusually important places, but for William's adventurers stone castles were far too expensive.[1] By Henry I's time the new-comers had

[1] Practically all, if not quite all, the adulterine castles of Stephen's time were of earth and wood. Their owners were not men of much substance, and they were built far too quickly to have been well made of stone. They all fell like houses of cards under Henry II's attacks.

flourished so well that the stone castle was no longer beyond their powers. Even in that time, however, the shell keep was more common than the heavy and solid square keep. The reason was twofold. The shell keep was comparatively inexpensive and comparatively light. It could be built on a mound of made soil. In other words, the old motte could be converted into a shell-keep castle. It was otherwise with the rectangular keep. That massive form of architecture, though one of the glories of the Norman period, was quite unsuited to being placed on made ground. It required a solid foundation. It was also expensive to build. It had, however, the merit of strength. To-day there are far more examples of rectangular keeps in existence than of shell keeps, though in the twelfth century the latter were much more common than the former.

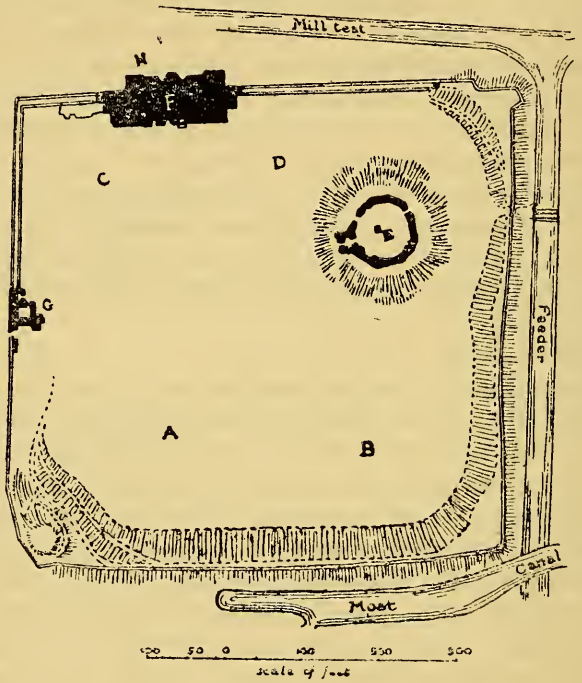
### The Shell Keep

The shell keep is, perhaps, not so early a form as the rectangular keep. It was, however, the simplest form, and as such we treat of it first. It was not so early as the rectangular keep for the simple reason that it could only be built with advantage on the old mounds or mottes, and they were regarded as sufficiently protected by wooden palisading until some time after the rectangular keep had been introduced.

The shell keep consisted of a ring of fortifications surrounding an open court. The fortifications were placed to form various shapes, according to the necessities of the case. Sometimes they were circular, sometimes rectangular, sometimes irregular. Cardiff Castle [1] was an example of the shell keep. The castle, which dates probably from the early part of the twelfth century, covers a plot of ground nearly square in form, 200 yards east and west, 216 yards north and south. It was bounded on the north and east and partially on the south side by banks of earth, on the west and the remainder of the south side by a wall. These banks are about 30 feet high, 90 feet broad at the base and 12 feet at the summit. Along

[1] The accounts of specific castles in this chapter are all based on G. T. Clark's *Mediæval Military Architecture.*

the top of the mound runs a light embattled wall about 6 feet high and 2 feet thick. At the south-east, north-east, and north-west angles the banks were enlarged, possibly for the purpose of carrying towers. Mr. Clark says: "The earthwork




PLAN OF CARDIFF CASTLE

A Outer Ward.
B Site of Shire Hall.
C Site of Middle Ward.
D Site of Inner Ward.
E Keep.
F Lodgings.
G Black Tower.
H Town Gate.

is returned about 70 yards along the south and 30 yards along the west fronts to give support to, and cover the commencement of, the walls of those sides, which, with an inconsiderable exception, are evidently very ancient, and were probably executed by Robert, Consul or Earl of Gloucester."

Outside the bank, along the north, south, and east fronts, was a moat or wet ditch fed by the Taff. The total area inside

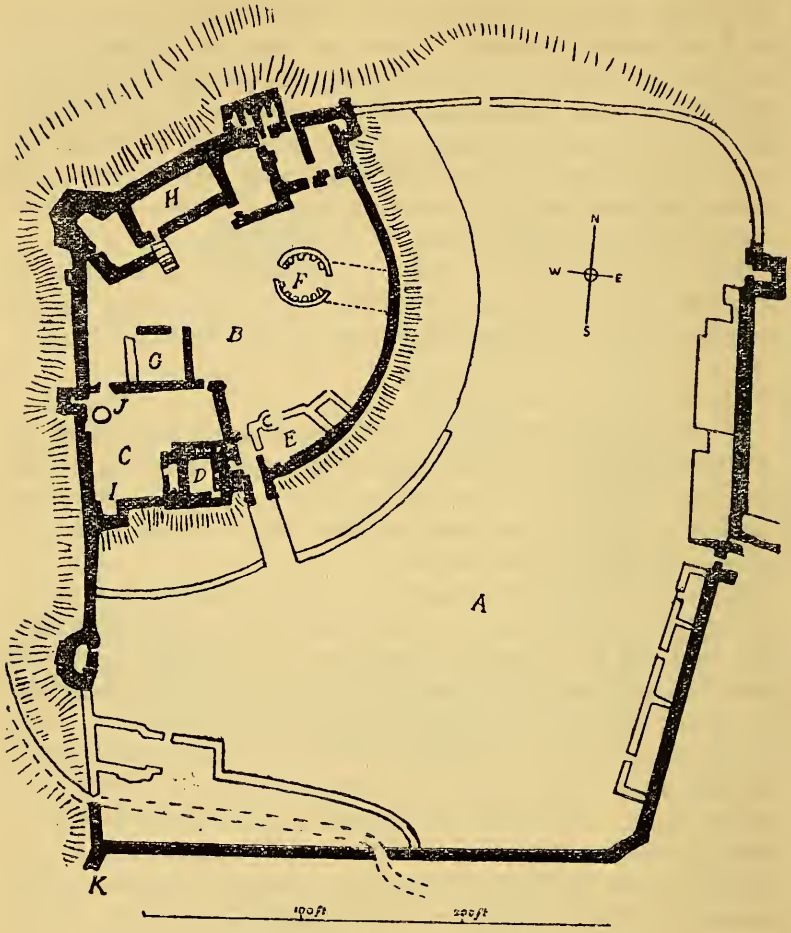
the castle wall was about 10 acres, within the counterscarp of the moat about 13 acres. The whole place was strengthened by the raising of an earthwork some 32 feet high a little west of the centre of the north bank of the mound. The earthwork had a circular flat top some 36 yards across, upon which was built a shell keep, polygonal in shape, with twelve sides each about the same size, with walls 30 feet high and 9 feet thick, constructed of rolled pebbles.

The entrance was by way of a gate-house, protected by a tower and portcullis. Altogether we may regard Cardiff Castle as a typical Norman structure of the shell-keep type.

### The Rectangular Keep

Of this form Clark says: "The rectangular keep is, of all military structures, the simplest in form, the grandest in outline and dimensions, the sternest in passive strength, the most durable in design and workmanship, and, in most cases, by some years the earliest in date."

Perhaps the noblest example of this type of fortress to be found in or near Wales is Ludlow Castle, in south Shropshire. The home of Lacys and of Mortimers, the residence of a king and the deathbed of a crown prince, the meeting-place of the notorious Council of Wales, the home of Milton when he wrote his *Comus* and of Butler when penning at least a part of *Hudibras*, this lovely marcher castle is full of historic associations. It has other claims upon the admiration of the wayfarer. Perched on a little hill, it looks down on the waters of the Corve and the Teme, which there flow swiftly enough to drive a little mill which nestles at the foot of the slope. On its other side, protected by an inner and an outer ward, it looks proudly over Ludlow town, a strange little place full of mediaeval memories and quaint old-world courtesies. The castle is to-day, save for a small portion, uninhabited and little more than a ruin, but sufficient remains to show how strong these fortresses must have been in the days before gunpowder enabled the attacker to blow the walls up and send his men through the breach thus




PLAN OF LUDLOW CASTLE

A Outer Ward.
B Middle Ward.
C Inner Ward.
D Keep.
E Gate-house.
F Chapel.
G Kitchen.
H Hall.
I Oven Tower.
J Postern Tower and well.
K Junction of town wall.

made to victory and to the capture of the castle. Of course, as Ludlow Castle exists to-day it is more elaborate than the earliest castles of the rectangular keep type. It possesses

the concentric defences found well-nigh universally in the Edwardian castles of a later age.

A general description of this beautiful ruin, either as it now stands or as it was in the days of its glory, would lead us through too many pages, and too far away from the history of Wales. Gazing up at those mighty walls, now tinted by time into a wondrous harmony with the verdure of the hillside on which they stand, one can well believe that time after time the Welsh failed to take this stronghold. One can only wonder at the bravery of men who, lightly armed as these were, should have attempted to assail it.[1]

### The Donjon Keep[2] or Juliet

As time went on the castle-builder, benefiting, no doubt, from the experience of the Crusaders, who had marvelled at the strength of Constantinople and had fallen in hundreds before the walls of many a Saracen stronghold, vastly improved the design and structure of the castle. By the end of Edward I's reign we may say that the type was perfected. We have in Wales perhaps one of the most perfect examples of this type ever built. Caerphilly, the castle to which we refer, must have been absolutely impregnable and irreducible except by famine or treachery.

Apart from general improvements in design, several smaller inventions had strengthened the hand of the defender. Thus in the old days the defenders of a castle could not command with their arrows the ground immediately around the castle wall. Their archers could shoot in comparative safety in a horizontal direction, but if they leant over the walls to send their arrows downward they were promptly picked off by the besiegers. Again, the catapult and the trebuchet, of which we shall speak later, had but one trajectory. Either could throw

[1] The history of Ludlow Castle and a full description of it may be found in the works of Eyton, Wright, and Clark.

[2] The donjon, dunjon, or domgion is, according to Mr. Round, the moated mound. That is, as we understand him, a donjon keep was a keep placed on a motte. We use the term in the sense given to it by G. T. Clark, who regards the donjon keep as one guarded by towers of a cylindrical form.

a stone a long way, but it could not throw it high up and at the same time a short distance forward. It could not, in other words, drop stones just over the castle walls on to the outside. Consequently, once the besiegers had reached the foot of the walls they were comparatively safe. They could start a breach in the walls at their leisure, or they could resort to fire. It was, however, early seen that to prevent breaches being fatal the stones of which castles were built should be small, so that the extraction of some with the aid of the bore or *terebra* would not cause the whole fabric to come down.

The first invention designed to protect the ground around the castle walls was the brattice. This was composed of a staging of woodwork projecting outside the stonework, supported on beams fixed into the walls, and guarded on the outer side by a screen of stout planks. Through the floor holes were bored, and through these holes the archer could shoot in safety to the ground beneath.

Another method which was adopted with signal success at Caerphilly was to surround the castle with water and horn-work, so that the enemy could not fight near at hand at all. Caerphilly is, indeed, so strongly designed and built that it is difficult, as we have said, to see how it could have been taken except through famine or by treachery. No attempt, indeed, was ever made to attack it before the invention of gunpowder, unless, perhaps, by William de la Zouche in 1329—and that attack, if ever made, was certainly unsuccessful.

The whole idea of the later concentric type of castle of which we are now speaking seems, indeed, to have been to raise obstacles in the path of the enemy, so that however he attacked he would be at some moment of assault at the mercy of the defenders. At the same time the donjon keep, with its four circular towers at the corners of the keep, enabled the defenders to concentrate their forces at the centre of the defences, from whence they could direct arrow and Greek fire (a dangerous defensive weapon, owing to the fact that the castle

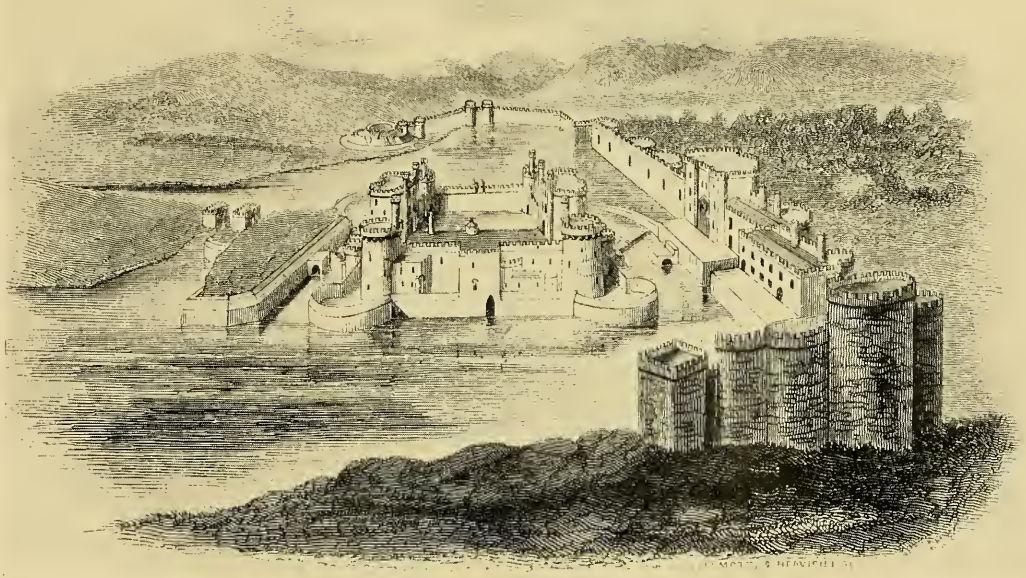


PLATE XXXVI. CAERPHILLY CASTLE

itself might be burnt) upon the attackers, from whichever direction they should come.

As we have said, Caerphilly Castle represents the final word

PLAN OF CAERPHILLY CASTLE IN 1842

From G. T. Clark's *A Description of the Castles of Kidwelly and Caerphilly.*

1 North Brook; 2 North Bank; 3 Causeway; 4 Outer Moat; 5 Platform; 6 North Lake; 7 Redoubt; 8 Inner Moat; 9 Middle Ward; 10 Inner Ward; 11 Grand Postern; 12 Covered way; 13 South Postern; 14 South Lake; 15 Bank of the lake; 16 Horn-work; 17 Root of the peninsula.

in castle-building. Erected in 1271 by Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and Lord of Glamorgan, it stands on a spit of gravel in an artificial lake made by damming a small stream, the dam being adequately protected by outworks and towers.

If reference is made to the plan above it will be seen that

there is an inner ward composed of a quadrangular enclosure. At the corners of the quadrangle are to be found four large towers, circular in shape and typical of the donjon keep. Rising above the curtain, in the middle of the east and the west fronts, are massive gate-houses. Encircling the inner ward is a middle ward, protected on the outside by a low curtain-wall, which could be completely dominated by archers on the walls of the inner ward. On the outside of these low walls the waters of the moat lap. The middle ward is connected with the outer ward by two wooden drawbridges connecting two causeways and giving access to the mainland on the east and west fronts.

The outer ward was composed of works of quite different size and design North and south but few defences were necessary, the lake being so wide and deep that approach from those directions was almost impossible. On the east, however, the water being narrow, an imposing and extremely strong gate-house tower was built. From either side stretches north and south a high, strong curtain or castellated wall. Each end of the curtain ends in the water, and both ends are protected with towers. On the outside there is a separate moat, or, in other words, the curtain and gate-house tower are entirely surrounded by water. The outer ward was also so designed, being cut in two by a dividing wall, that if one end fell the other could still be defended successfully.

On the western side the stonework was less powerful, but a natural advantage had enabled the builders to make that side extremely strong. Between the middle ward and the gate in the outer western wall will be observed a piece of horn-work with a low curtain rising but a little above the water. This part of the fortress is again completely surrounded by water. The attacker would have to cross a sheet of water, then cross the horn-work (during which time he would be in full view of the archers on the castle walls), then cross more water, climb a wall completely dominated by the donjons, cross a courtyard, and then commence to attack the keep.

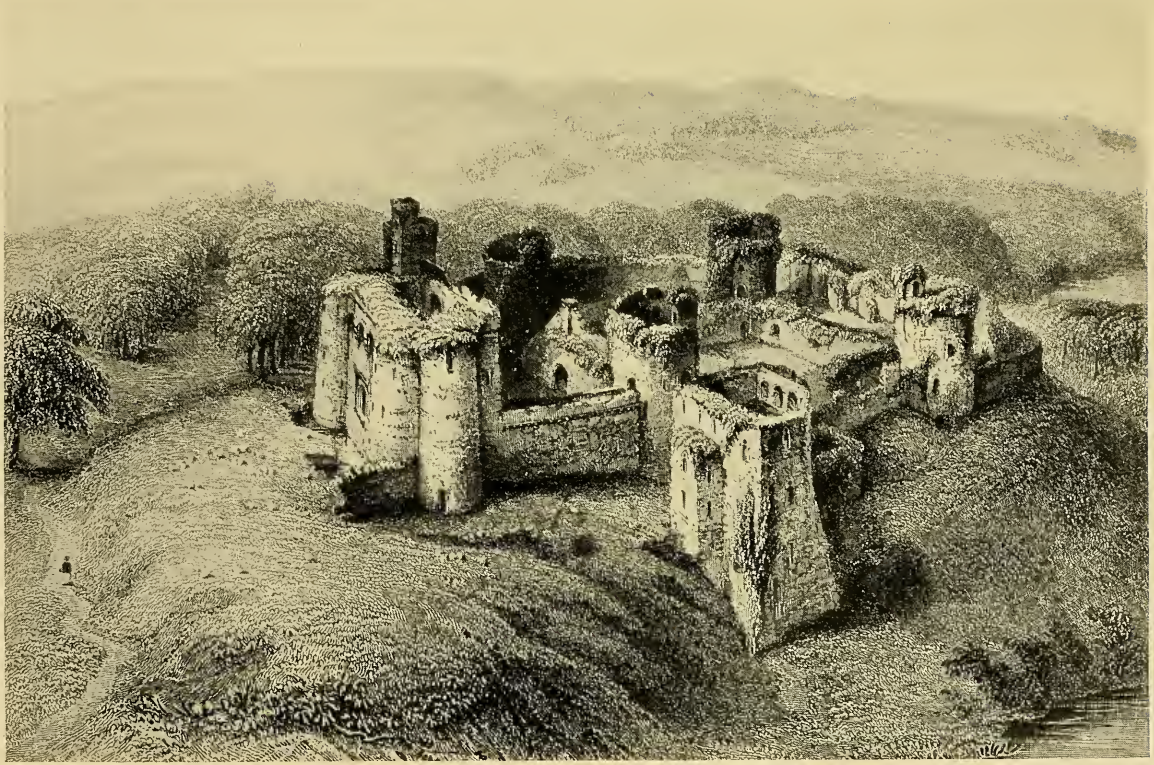


PLATE XXXVII. KIDWELLY (CYDWELI) CASTLE

## The Methods of Attack

Even as to-day improvements in armour-plating have resulted in the production of projectiles of such wonderful piercing power that nothing at present known can resist them, so in mediaeval times advancements in castle-building caused developments in engines of attack, so that the reduction of all but the strongest and most elaborate castles was by no means impossible.

A description of the more usual of these methods of attack may perhaps have an interest for the reader, and is certainly not impertinent in the history of a country in which castle-building and castle-razing played such a prominent part in the lives of the important men of the times.

Castles were usually attacked by the Welsh in an open manner, reliance being placed upon sudden night assaults, which were either instantly successful or were complete failures. The attacking force, once in, relied in almost all cases upon fire as a means of reducing the castle to ruins. We can picture mentally some hardy chieftain leading a small and gallant band some dark and stormy night to the assault. Each man carried a scaling-ladder. These were placed against the outer walls; once over, fuel, which was carried by each man, was piled against the most combustible parts, and once lit they trusted to the wind and to fortune to burn the lord and his retainers out of their stronghold. Sometimes treachery was at work, and then what we should call murder and assassination took the place of fire. There are, however, examples of developed attempts at castle-razing, when all the arts of war were put into operation in order to bring about the destruction of some hated stronghold. The methods then adopted we must now shortly describe.

The most important arm in those days, particularly in South Wales, was the long-bow. In Giraldus' *Itinerary* we read that "the people of what is called Venta [1] are more

[1] Roughly speaking, South Wales.

accustomed to war, more famous for valour,[1] and more expert in archery than those of any other part of Wales. The following examples prove the truth of this assertion. In the last capture of the aforesaid castle [Abergavenny], which happened in our days, two soldiers passing over a bridge to take refuge in a tower built on a mound of earth, the Welsh, taking them in the rear, penetrated with their arrows the oaken portal of the tower, which was four fingers thick; in memory of which circumstance the arrows were preserved in the gate. William de Breose also testifies that one of his soldiers, in a conflict with the Welsh, was wounded by an arrow, which passed through his thigh and the armour with which it was cased on both sides, and through that part of the saddle which is called the *alva*, mortally wounding the horse. Another soldier had his hip, equally sheathed in armour, penetrated by an arrow quite to the saddle, and on turning his horse round received a similar wound on the opposite hip, which fixed him on both sides of his seat." Our authority adds: "What more could be expected from a ballista? Yet the bows used by this people are not made of horn, ivory, or yew, but of wild elm, unpolished, rude, and uncouth, but stout; not calculated to shoot an arrow to a great distance, but to inflict very severe wounds in close fight."

How far these bows could shoot effectively we do not know They probably had a much shorter range than the Turkish bow. With this latter weapon Mahmoud Effendij shot an arrow 482 feet in 1795, and Ingo Simon sent an arrow from a similar bow more than 459 feet in 1913. The modern record with the long bow, we believe, is 340 feet, made by Mr. Troward in 1798, but that was when archery had quite decayed, and probably does not equal the distances shot by archers trained from childhood in the use of the weapon for war.

To get to close quarters with the defenders the attacking force employed an engine called a 'cat.' This was a wooden building in many tiers, which was so constructed that it could

[1] North Wales has, however, quite as many, if not more, examples to show of rugged bravery.

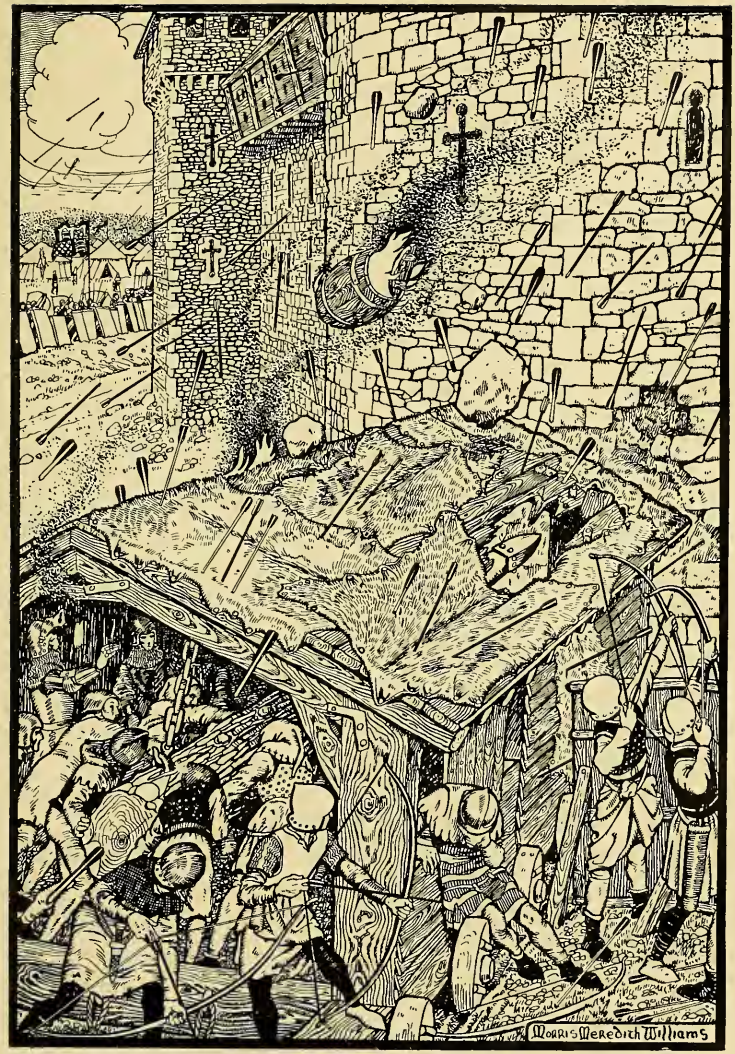



PLATE XXXVIII. ATTACK ON A CASTLE 238

*Morris Meredith Williams*

be slowly pushed forward while full of men. It possessed the advantage of enabling the attacking archers to fight on a level with those guarding the walls. It had the disadvantage that Greek fire thrown from a trebuchet or catapult could destroy it, involving all the attackers in one dreadful disaster.

If the castle were of such a form or construction that the near approach of archers was impracticable, two chief means alone remained of reducing it—apart from starvation and treachery. The one was by mining, the other by engines of attack designed either to break down the walls by hurling heavy weights against them or to set fire to the castle by throwing great quantities of ignited petroleum or Greek fire on to the roofs of the buildings.

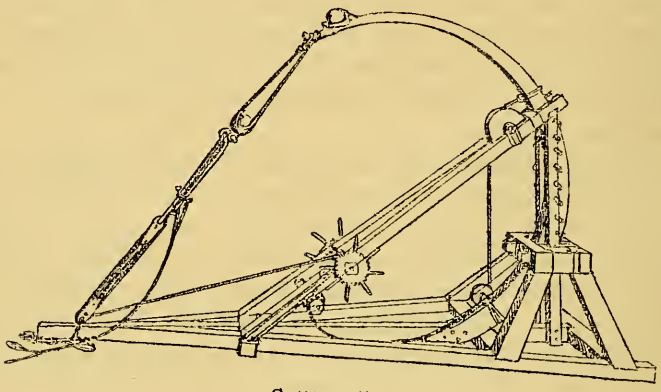
As regards mining, this, of course, was only possible where the siege was a protracted one. It was extremely difficult and dangerous in the case of a moated castle unless the moat had previously been drained, and there was always the possibility of the defenders counter-mining and catching the attackers like rats in a trap. The general aim of the miner was, of course, to dig out the foundations underground so that the walls of the castle fell, or to burrow right under the outer walls and outer wards, break out suddenly into the inner ward, and then, by a concerted rush, burst in upon and overwhelm the defenders, who would be defending the upper walls rather than the floor of the keep. In a properly designed castle such a perfect undermining would be well-nigh impossible, for the castle would be built either on rock which, in the days before explosives, could not be pierced, or upon made ground which would slide if undermined—though, as regards sliding, the miners were always careful to prop and pin with wood just as they do to-day in coal-mines.

## Engines of War

If it were desired to reduce the castle by engines of war [1] the catapult or the ballista was used, or in later times the

[1] We rely for the major part of what follows upon Sir R. Payne-Gallwey's interesting monograph entitled *Projectile-throwing Engines of the Ancients.*

trebuchet. Both of the first two weapons were used by the Greeks and Romans. The catapult was designed to throw heavy weights, the ballista to hurl mighty arrows, against the defenders or attackers, as the case might be. The attacking engine had to be placed at least 300 yards from the walls. The missiles had to be thrown over the walls, and the weapon must thus have had a range of from 400 to 500 yards. Josephus tells us that he witnessed a catapult throw stones weighing



CATAPULT
From *Il Codica Atlantico*, Leonardo da Vinci.

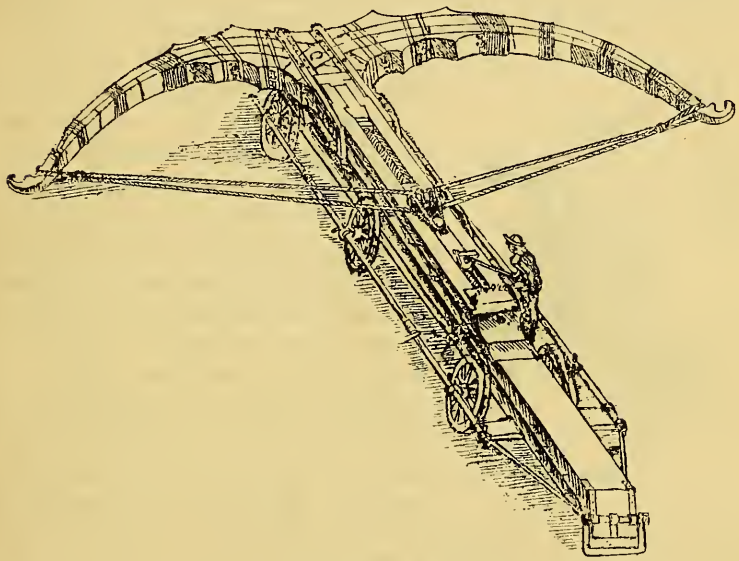
the equivalent of fifty-seven pounds a distance of two or more stades—*i.e.* from 400 to 500 yards. Agesistratus says that Greek catapults had a range of from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 stades, or nearly half a mile.

The catapult usually consisted of a heavy frame with a long arm fixed at one end in a skein of twisted rope or sinew. The other end had a cup or sling to hold the missile. This end was slowly pulled down by a rope passing round a horizontal bar rotated by the aid of winches. When sufficiently pulled down a catch was released, the arm sprang back, and on reaching the vertical struck a heavy bar of wood attached to the main framework. The arm being thus suddenly checked, the missile was hurled forward at a considerable speed.[1]

[1] The form of catapult described differs in some particulars from that illustrated above.

The use of the catapult must have required much practice, since it was innocent of all scientific means of sighting.

The ballista was very similar in nature, and was really an immensely powerful bow, with arrows in proportion. Leonardo da Vinci in his *Il Codica Atlantico* gives an illustration of a rather unusual type, which we reproduce.



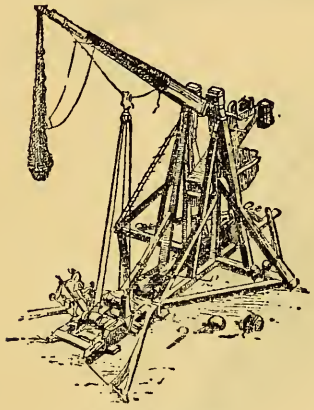
BALLISTA
From *Il Codica Atlantico*, Leonardo da Vinci.

The trebuchet was an improvement upon the catapult, and was designed to throw greater weights than was possible in the case of the latter. It is said to have been introduced into siege operations by the French in the twelfth century. It was quite developed by 1280, when Egidio Colonna described it. It is the subject of one of Leonardo's drawings in his *Il Codica Atlantico*.

The trebuchet differed in principle from the catapult in that the motive force was obtained by suddenly dropping a heavy weight instead of suddenly releasing the tension on a skein of twisted fibre. Almost any force could thus be

obtained by making the weight sufficiently great. It is known to have been capable of throwing a 300-pound missile 300 yards, and must have been an effective weapon of offence.

We have now passed in review some of the main points connected with castles, the modes of defence, and the means of attack. With us these things are merely a matter of curiosity; they form a subject over which we spend a more or less interesting half-hour. With the Welsh in mediaeval times they were the study of a lifetime; they were matters of life and death.



THE TREBUCHET

Before closing this chapter and returning to our account of the political history of Wales it is desirable to add that although the building of castles gave great power to the castellans and was an effective method of subduing a country, there is no reason to believe that they were used to torment or torture the generality of men. As we have said, the lord of a castle had immense power over the surrounding commoners. His power was, indeed, so great that they were driven to seek his protection by becoming his men. The late Professor Freeman took the view that the Norman castles were the object of a peculiar hatred on the part of the English and Welsh. He refers to their occupants as devils and evil men, and talks much about dungeons. There is no evidence, however, that the Normans were worse than their generation. There is no evidence that the English and Welsh castles contained those dreadful *oubliettes* so common in German castles, into which unhappy prisoners were flung to be forgotten, as the name informs us, and to be eaten to death by rats. That dungeons did exist is certain, but they were not underground. The prisoner was allowed plenty of light and air. Even the dungeon at Castel Coch, which Mr. Clark calls the worst in

Britain, was not completely underground. The Normans did not, in fact, rely on harsh imprisonment as a mode of terrorizing. Mutilation and blinding—which were common in the tenth century alike in Wales and England and in France, as the reader of the letters of Abélard and Héloïse will doubtless remember—thumb-breaking, and, in more serious cases, hanging, were the methods adopted to procure obedience or to punish wrongdoers. In justice to the Normans we must remember that the Welsh were equally ready to practise similar cruelties—and that not merely on captured Normans, but upon their own people and their own relatives.

We make these remarks, not in order to justify Norman aggression or Norman cruelty, but because it is very desirable to appreciate the fact that the Normans were fighting the Welsh princes rather than the Welsh people. Occasionally some act of aggression, some wrongful exaction, some injustice roused the men of Wales, and then they swept away castle after castle. For the most part, however, they lived under the Norman castellans quite as prosperously as under their own tribal chiefs. Again, it must be understood that throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although we shall speak of this or that Welsh prince ruling in Powys, Deheubarth, or Gwynedd, such princes had sworn fealty to the English king and had to recognize the presence of Norman lords in their territories. It is quite impossible to assert that after the operations of the earlier marcher lords Wales was completely independent. It was not until the national movement under the Llywelyns, following upon the temporary break-up of the English polity under John, that the claim of complete independence was made—a claim which, as we shall see, was finally negatived by Edward I.

Throughout all these years, however, although Welsh princes were placing their hands between those of English sovereigns, tendering homage and swearing fealty, the Welsh people lived on a separate nation, preserving their own peculiar characteristics and their inherent love of freedom. They have remained a separate nation from the English even to

this present date, when both Norman castles and Welsh princes have passed away. As Lord Chief Justice Crewe said : " Time hath his revolutions ; there must be a period and an end to all temporal things, an end of names and dignities, and whatsoever is terrene. And why not of De Vere ? For where is Bohun ? Where is Mowbray ? Where is Mortimer ? Nay, which is more, and most of all, where is Plantagenet ? "

The castles have gone. No longer do men-at-arms walk the castle wards, or archers shape their arrows in the tower chambers ; life no longer clings around the castle wall ; princes no longer lead the Welsh to battle. But the Welsh nation is still a nation ; the Welsh language is still a living means of intercourse ; Welsh characteristics have proved stronger than the conqueror of Norman castles—Time.

# CHAPTER XIV

## GRUFFYDD AP CYNAN

LIVED 1054–1137; REIGNED INTERMITTENTLY BETWEEN 1075–1137

THE prince whose life forms the subject of this chapter possessed qualities which require a fuller treatment than has been accorded in our earlier pages to the contemporary lords of Powys and Deheubarth.

The writer of to-day is enabled to give some details of his life, since Gruffydd is the subject of a biography written, not improbably, shortly after his death.[1] This book, though obviously the work of a cleric prejudiced in favour of the prince whose life he is describing, is in the main historically accurate.

Gruffydd, whose father Cynan was rightfully king of Gwynedd, was born in Ireland, to which country Cynan retired during the ascendancy of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn. Cynan, indeed, seems to have been almost unknown to the Welsh of the next generation, so that we sometimes find Gruffydd referred to as Gruffydd the grandson of Iago. This Iago was the son of Idwal ap Meurig, and was king of Gwynedd until 1039, when he was slain by his own men and was succeeded by Gruffydd ap Llywelyn. Though Cynan made certain attempts to regain his father's kingdom, they were all unsuccessful, and we find him contenting himself with a life of repose in exile. He married Ragnaillt, daughter of Olaf, king of Dublin, the son of King Sitruic of the Silken Beard.

Gruffydd, the child of this union, was born in 1054 in Dublin, in the religious foundation of the Church of Christ. He seems

[1] Mr. Arthur Jones' excellent edition of the *Hanes Gruffydd ap Cynan* has been mainly used in this chapter.

to have been educated or reared at Swords, a short distance to the north of Dublin, though another account says that he was born and reared in the Church of Christ.

Early in life he seems to have been spurred on by his mother to make an attempt to recover his rightful inheritance. She told him how Gwynedd, his own country, was being ruled by usurpers and tyrants, Cynwric ap Rhiwallon and Trahaearn ap Caradoc. These two princes had seized Gwynedd on the death of Bleddyn, Trahaearn claiming as Bleddyn's cousin and seizing Môn and Arvon, Cynwric ap Rhiwallon of Maelor making good his claim, apparently by force, to Lleyn.

### The First Expedition

Gruffydd, fired by the recital of the wrongs which had been committed against him and his people, begged aid of the king of Dublin, which, to his joy, was readily granted. We find him setting out with many ships and Irish and Danish men to conquer Gwynedd.

The expedition made for Abermenai, a port on the western end of the Menai Strait, near Caernarvon. Having landed, the young leader sent messengers to the men of Môn and Arvon and to certain important Welsh noblemen. He also sought aid from Robert of Rhuddlan. The reception accorded him showed that his countrymen were eager to throw off the supremacy of the usurpers. Robert of Rhuddlan promised aid, and, in fact, sent sixty of his best soldiers to help Gruffydd in the coming struggle. Gruffydd was also cheered by the prophecy of Tangwystyl, a prophetess, and a relation of his, who foretold that he would rule.

Gruffydd now collected a small band of stalwarts, including the men Robert had supplied, and sent them under the leadership of the three sons of Merwydd to attempt the capture or destruction of Cynwric. The expedition was successful, and Einion, a youth of Arvon, brought the glad tidings to Gruffydd that Cynwric had been surprised and he and many of his followers slain. For the bringing of this good news Gruffydd rewarded the messenger with a beautiful woman, as he desired.

Gruffydd now decided to lead his main host in person against the other usurper, Trahaearn, who was then at Meirionydd. The opposing forces met at a place called Gwaet Erw, or 'The Bloody Acre.' The result is thus described by the cleric biographer: "God granted [Gruffydd] victory over his enemies in that day, and many thousands fell on the part of Trahaearn, and he, lamenting, escaped with difficulty and a few [men] with him from the battle. Gruffydd and his host pursued him through plain and mountain to the borders of his own land [Powys]. Therefore Gruffydd was exalted from that day forth and was rightfully called King of Gwynedd."

Gruffydd was not, however, as yet firmly established in his principality. Although doubtless he gained some fame and applause from his successful despoiling of Rhuddlan Castle, which we have already referred to,[1] he seems to have incurred the hatred of no inconsiderable portion of his own subjects. We read, indeed, that after his victory over Trahaearn he began "to pacify the kingdom and to organize the people and to rule them with a rod of iron." This, together with the ascendancy of his Irish mercenaries, probably accounts for the revolt which followed.

Whatever the cause may be, we find the three sons of Merwydd leading the men of Lleyn against the leader whom so short a time before they had been aiding. The Irish retainers were attacked and many were slain. The evil news was soon carried to Trahaearn, who instantly determined to take advantage of the disaffection in Gruffydd's ranks. He, with Gwrgeneu ap Seisyll, joined in an attack on Gruffydd, valuable aid being rendered to the allies by the leaders of the revolt. Not only had Lleyn and the sons of Merwydd revolted, but the men of Eifyonydd also 'betrayed' Gruffydd. In addition to this defection we read that Tewdwr and Collwyn, leaders in Anglesey, also turned against Gruffydd.

Gruffydd was now hard pressed. He had only the men of Môn and Arvon and a few Danes and Irishmen to assist him.

[1] See p. 186.

With these, however, he went to meet his enemies. In the fight which ensued we read that "King Gruffydd sat on his horse in his troop with his flashing sword mowing both traitors and enemies, like Agamemnon, King of Phrygia, of old in the fight of Troy. Then Tewdwr, a youth from Anglesey, arch-betrayer of Gruffydd, approached with streaming sword and moved aside to come to his saddle-bow behind his saddle."

The attempted murder was prevented by one of Gruffydd's knights, who persuaded his prince to give up the unequal struggle and take ship for Ireland.

### Second Expedition

On his return to Ireland Gruffydd was urged to renew his attempt at conquest. This time he was furnished with a fleet of thirty ships full of Irishmen and Danes. Again he made for Abermenai, where he disembarked his men.

Trahaearn, anticipating attack, sought to strengthen his position by retreating to Meirionydd, where he concentrated his forces. Gruffydd, on the other hand, withdrew his followers who lived in Lleyn and Arvon to Môn, together with their property. A plan which made for safety when an attack from Trahaearn was anticipated had the unfortunate result of putting near to the piratical Danes, who had accompanied him from Ireland, much booty. They promptly took advantage of the opportunity, and, despite Gruffydd's refusal to permit them to plunder the Welsh, seized all the spoil they could and carried it and their leader off to Ireland.

It was about this time that the Norman lords Fat Hugh of Chester, Robert of Rhuddlan, and Walter de Lacy, led by Gwrgeneu ap Seisyll, traversed the mountains of Eryri and ravaged Lleyn, so that, in the words of the biographer, "the country was a desert for eight years . . . the inhabitants of this country were scattered portionless and needy into the world."

### Third Expedition

Gruffydd again succeeded in raising a force in Ireland, being aided by Diarmiad mac Mael-na-mbo. He gradually assembled

a fleet manned by Danes, Irishmen, and Britons, and he set sail again for Wales in 1081, some six years after the revolt of the men of Lleyn. This time contrary winds carried him to Porthclais, near St. David's, where he was met by Rhys, king of Deheubarth.

The meeting of the two dispossessed kings as recounted by Gruffydd's biographer is interesting, and we relate it in the words of the old-time scribe. Rhys, hastening to meet Gruffydd, fell on his knees, saying, "'Welcome Gruffydd, king of the kings of Wales. To you I fly. Before you I fall upon my knees to beseech your help and your support.' 'Who are you?' said Gruffydd, 'and wherefore are you come hither?' 'I am Rhys,' said he, 'son of Tewdwr, lord of this dominion a little while ago, and now I am as an outcast and a fugitive, and almost a nonentity, hiding in this sanctuary.' 'Who is it that put you to flight?' quoth Gruffydd. 'My lord,' said the other, 'three kings of the chief lands of Wales with their hosts descended upon my provinces lately, and daily they are plundering it.' 'Who,' said Gruffydd, 'are the kings who go among thy people and thy possessions in so warlike a manner as this?' 'Caradoc ap Gruffydd,' said he, 'of Gwent Uch Coed and Iscoed, and the men of Gwent, and the men of Glamorgan, and many Norman arbalisters with them; Meilir ap Rhiwallon and the men of Powys with him, King Trahaearn and the men of Arwystli.'

"When Gruffydd heard the name of the usurper, he snorted with rage, and demanded of him [Rhys] what he would give him for fighting on his behalf against these men. 'Verily,' said Rhys, 'the half of my kingdom I will give you, and besides this I will do homage to you.'"

The terms seem to have been satisfactory to Gruffydd, who truly had little to lose by a compact of such a nature. The two princes took an oath of alliance on relics, and, this sacred ceremony having been performed, hastened to attack their enemies. Gruffydd's opponents were Trahaearn, Meilyr ap Rhiwallon, and Caradog ap Gruffydd. The exact site of the battle which resulted has not been finally determined. We

will accept the identification of it with Mynydd Carn Ingle, near Newport, in Pembroke, as correct. Certain it is that the battle, known as the battle of Mynydd Carn, had an important effect upon Welsh history.

Gruffydd's host, which had left St. David's, after having received the blessing of Bishop Sulien, "the wisest of the Britons," came up with the enemy about eventide. The more timid Rhys seems to have wished to postpone the struggle until the next day. "Lord, let us delay the battle until the morrow, for it is evening now and the day is spent," we hear him exclaim. Gruffydd replied: "You delay it if you desire: I am for battle and shall charge upon them."

True to his resolve, Gruffydd, who, we are informed, was "very brave in battle," rushed into the fray. His men, including the "Irish black-devils" and Danes, armed with two-edged axes and iron flails, struck terror into the enemy, approaching as they did through the twilight. It is evident that the men of Powys did not give way without a struggle. In the result, however, victory lay with Gruffydd. Meilyr and Caradog were both slain. Of Trahaearn we are told that he was "pierced in the centre until he was on the ground dying, biting with his teeth the long grass, and groping about to come upon his weapons; and Gweharis, the Irishman, made bacon of him as of a pig."

Gruffydd, as usual, followed up his victory with vigour. He and his followers pursued the beaten army "through groves and glens and marshes and mountains throughout that night by the moon and throughout the following day." The losses then incurred by the Welsh of the south and east must have crippled Powys and South Wales for many years.

In this pursuit of the vanquished Rhys does not appear to have taken part. Indeed, we read that, fearing treachery on the part of Gruffydd, he retired secretly from the battle about the time "when man and bush had the same colour." The reason for this defection is not clear; the result was the harrying of Rhys' possessions.

### Gruffydd a Prisoner

Gruffydd now seems to have indulged in a plundering expedition. We read of his devastating Arwystli, destroying and slaying the peasantry, bearing into captivity its women and maidens. He then turned his attention to Powys, "where he showed on the journey cruelty to his opponents," and again we read, "he spared not so much as the churches." Whether this impious act turned the tide of fortune we know not, but shortly afterward Gruffydd was a victim of the plot which resulted in his imprisonment in Fat Hugh's city of Chester for many years.

We are told that "as he was enjoying the kingdom according to custom, Meirion the Red, his baron, was stirred by an arrow of the devil and accused him before Earl Hugh of Chester." Meirion succeeded in enticing Gruffydd to an unprotected place at Edeyrnyon to meet Hugh of Chester and Hugh (? Roger) of Shrewsbury. Gruffydd's "foreigners" went with him. In the result Gruffydd was seized and dragged off to Chester Gaol, where he was placed in the worst cell. The thumbs of the "foreigners" (probably the Irish and Danish mercenaries) were broken so that in future they could not use the bow or direct the spear.

This imprisonment, which commenced in 1081, lasted probably until 1093. In the meantime the Normans pushed ahead with their castle-building in North Wales, as we have seen.

We are now introduced to the romantic story of Cynwric the Tall, who, while on a visit to Chester to buy necessaries, saw his king sitting in the market-place loaded with chains, an object of derision. It was dinner-time and the burgesses were indoors eating. Cynwric seized his opportunity, lifted up the fettered king, and bore him away unperceived. The most daring part of the rescue having been performed safely, we find Cynwric maintaining his lord secretly in his house while Gruffydd regained his strength. As soon as Gruffydd could bear the toil of travelling he was taken by night to Anglesey, where he was supported by Sandef, son of Aere.

Thence he escaped to Ireland, to return soon after with more Irish aid. Again he made for Abermenai, but contrary winds took him to Porth Honddu, in Deheubarth. We find him attacked and hunted by the men of Deheubarth (probably the Normans), so that he was compelled to flee to Ardudwy, where, we read, "men pitied him and ministered to him secretly in desert caves." As time went on followers slowly joined him, and he was soon powerful enough to lead a plundering expedition against Earl Hugh. As yet, however, he had not the resources to carry on the struggle, and again he made Ireland his sanctuary.

### Fifth Expedition

From Ireland he seems to have passed over to the Isle of Man, where he sought and obtained aid from King Guthrie. Setting out with a considerable fleet of sixty ships, he landed in Anglesey, where he fought an indecisive battle with the Normans. Unable to make good his footing, he again set sail, his fleet making for the Islands. Gruffydd himself broke away from the rest of the fleet, anchored off the Skerries, near Holyhead, and from thence attacked and despoiled a ship coming from Chester and slew its crew. On the next day we find him landing at Port Nevin, in Lleyn, where he was welcomed by the men of Lleyn, Eifyonydd, Ardudwy, Arvon, Rhos, and Dyffryn Clwyd.

These were the men who would have felt most directly the Norman advances, and who would have suffered most from the new lords of the castles at Rhuddlan, Deganwy, and elsewhere. We find Gruffydd now setting out on a campaign of castle destruction. The *Brut* under date 1092 (corrected date 1094) tells us that in that year the Britons demolished the Norman castles in Gwynedd. The biographer of Gruffydd tells us that about this time (the dates are a difficulty if Gruffydd was a prisoner for twelve years) "he delivered Gwynedd from castles." The two references are probably concerned with the same campaign.

The first attack was directed against the new castle at

Aberlleiniog. After a lengthy resistance it was eventually destroyed and its steward and many knights killed. This battle is also noteworthy for that Gellan, or Crellan, "chief harpist and musician of Gruffydd's fleet," was then slain. This Crellan is referred to in the *Triads* as one of the three chief performers on the harp. It may be that he was the inspirer of Gruffydd's love of music which caused him to effect improvements in the laws relating to that art and to attempt to introduce the Irish pipe to his countrymen—an attempt which was not, however, very successful.

The rising tide of revolt passed on. Castle after castle was destroyed in Gwynedd. In Powys similar deeds were being done. Castles at Shrewsbury and Montgomery were burned. The men of South Wales swept away well-nigh every castle, save those at Pembroke and Rhyd y Gors. The whole revolt was probably not unconnected with the absence of William II in Normandy, where he had gone in the spring of 1094, and the rebellion against Rufus in 1095 headed by Robert of Northumberland. Roger de Lacy was concerned in this rebellion, and on its suppression was disinherited and exiled.

### William Rufus invades North Wales

As soon as Rufus had re-established his position he determined to aid the marcher lords of Wales to recover their supremacy. We therefore find him assembling a considerable army. He pushed on in the autumn of the year (a fatal mistake, as Henry II was to discover at a later time), and by November had reached Mur y Castell, in northern Ardudwy. According to Gruffydd's biographer, William's intention was to subdue the Welsh completely, or, as he puts it, "destroy utterly all of the people until there should be alive not so much as a dog." If this were indeed his intention he was singularly unsuccessful in realizing it. Gruffydd, adopting a plan of campaign which he and his sons often repeated in future years with similar success, collected his forces, placed ambushes and obstacles in the defiles and other places where they could be used most advantageously, and generally

harassed the advancing army, at the same time withdrawing all the people inhabiting the line of march, with their property and food-stuffs, so that Rufus cannot but have found it almost impossible to feed his army, now some considerable distance from its base.

The result was that Rufus, realizing that the winter coming on would prove fatal to his expedition, determined to retire to Chester. The campaign was a hopeless failure, and, as the biographer says, "he did not take with him any kind of profit or gain except one cow."

### Conflict with the Marcher Lords

The Welsh, elated at the failure of the king's attempt at conquest, continued their general campaign of castle-razing. In the south they were successful: Rhyd y Gors fell and Pembroke was closely beset. In the north, however, Earl Hugh of Chester joined with Hugh of Shrewsbury and made a determined attempt to break the power of Gruffydd. Gruffydd called in the aid of Cadwgan and Maredudd of Powys, and these leaders adopted the policy of withdrawing the people of Gwynedd to Anglesey, where they defended themselves "as in a stronghold surrounded by the ocean." They also called to their aid Irish and Danish mercenaries, who came in sixteen long-keeled ships to the aid of Gruffydd.

The two earls soon made their appearance near Anglesey. We pause to observe the ease with which the marcher lords could strike across Wales compared with the difficulty which Norman kings found in doing the same thing. Whatever may be the reason for the earls' easy and unopposed march (the fact that Gruffydd had retired with his men does not remove our difficulty, for we ask, Why did he find it necessary to retire when he had resisted so successfully King William, as in later times his son resisted King Henry II?), they were shortly in a position to attack Anglesey. They seem to have feared the Irish mercenaries, so that we find them offering the Irish the tempting bait of unlimited plunder if they would fail Gruffydd at the critical moment. The Irish agreed. The

earls attacked, and Gruffydd and Cadwgan, deceived and betrayed by their mercenaries, abandoned the struggle and fled to Ireland.

The battle seems to have continued despite their absence. Suddenly there appeared sailing over the sea a royal fleet. King Magnus the Barefoot, one of Norway's boldest plunderers, swept down on the island. Hearing how the islanders had been betrayed and deserted, he determined to aid them, and forthwith attacked the Normans. A Halogalander shot an arrow at Earl Hugh of Shrewsbury which bent the nose-screen of the earl's helmet; Magnus himself at the same moment sped an arrow straight and true which, finding a way through the damaged helmet, entered Hugh's eye and stretched him dead upon the sea-lapped sands.

Magnus and his followers then attacked and killed many of the Normans, so that "they fell from their horses like fruit from its branches." The Norwegian now appears to have thought that honour was satisfied, and, weighing anchor, he and his knights melted away into the distance like a dream, as it might have seemed, had it not been that stark witnesses of his presence gazed sightless up into the heavens. Earl Hugh lay slain and many of his followers.

The Normans were now, however, in undisputed possession of Môn. They mercilessly ravaged the island, and many captives were taken. As we have said, the Normans had promised the Irish much plunder and many slaves, men, women, youths, and maidens. We are told in a quaint passage how the Normans redeemed their promise. Hugh of Chester acted toward the Irish "like a faithful man to unfaithful, for he succeeded in collecting all the toothless, deformed, lame, one-eyed, troublesome, feeble hags and offered them to them in return for their treachery." The scribe naïvely adds; "When they saw this, they loosened their fleet and made for the deep toward Ireland."

Gruffydd returned in the year following from Ireland to find Anglesey deserted. He made peace with Earl Hugh and received a small allotment of land. But the succeeding years

were bitter ones for him. His pride was broken, and, in the words of his biographer, " he spent his life for some years in poverty and misery, hoping for the future providence of God."

### Gruffydd's Rise to Power

This was in 1099. We believe that the change did not come in Gruffydd's life and in the affairs of Gwynedd until the death of Earl Hugh in 1101. Even then it is probable that his return to the old position of lord of Gwynedd was a slow and painful one. His biographer slurs over these years, so that we may be sure his hero was not accomplishing great things. That Gruffydd was slowly extending his power, however, appears from the fact that Henry I is found leading an expedition against him and the princes of Powys. The biographer also tells us that after a visit to Henry's court he was granted the cantrefs of Lleyn, Eifyonydd, Ardudwy, and Aillechwdd, and that thereafter " everything prospered before Gruffydd, and on all sides he freed everything before Gwynedd, and daily there slipped to him others from Rhos, and their possessions with them." Unfortunately neither the *Brut* nor Florence of Worcester confirms this account, but both state that Gruffydd's first visit to Henry's court took place in 1116—that is to say, after Henry's invasion.

However this may be, in 1114 Henry raised a considerable force for the Welsh wars. The army of invasion came from south, centre, and north. Alexander of Scotland and the young Earl Richard of Chester led the northern contingent, which took the north coast road. Henry led the centre, which was joined at Mur y Castell by the southern contingent, and the combined force pushed on along the Roman road crossing the Berwyn range. Maredudd of Powys, fearing the strength arrayed against him, made peace with Henry, but Owain ap Cadwgan, who, as we have seen, was not the man to fear to take risks, retired with his people and possessions to Eryri. As for Gruffydd, we are told that, " according to his experience in warfare, [he] took up a position in the arms of snowclad Snowdon."

PLATE XXXIX. PENMON CHURCH AND PRIORY

*Photo Owen Evans, Conway*

We are in doubt as to what engagements took place, if any. The Welsh princes seem to have offered peace on terms. The English king on his part doubtless had little relish for guerrilla warfare among the forests and glens of Snowdonia. Peace was made. Gruffydd lost no territory, but recognized Henry as overlord; made homage; swore fealty and paid a heavy fine. Henceonward Gruffydd seems to have realized that Henry was too strong to be opposed, and, like a wise man, realizing the strength of the other side, he determined to court the favour of his powerful overlord.

We believe that this is the explanation of the prosperity of the succeeding years in Gwynedd. Gruffydd continuously pursued the policy of friendship with the English court. In the year following he surrendered Gruffydd ap Rhys, who had fled to him for safety, to the English. In 1116 he visited the English court, where we are told Henry entertained him "splendidly." In 1121, although the biographer makes Gruffydd a party to the opposition to Henry's second invasion, it is probable that the *Annales* and the *Brut* are right in saying that Gruffydd took no part in it, and, in fact, threatened active hostility against any Powysians who sought safety within his dominions. He seems to have pursued the same policy of peaceful friendship with the king of Ireland, so that his realm was freed from the evils resulting from frequent piratical raids. At the same time he stationed his sons (who included Owain Gwynedd, one of the greatest of the Princes of Gwynedd in after-years) on the border, so that attacks from rival princes could be checked before his people were plundered or his country devastated.

The result of these wise measures was a period of great prosperity for Gwynedd. As his biographer says, "He increased all manner of good in Gwynedd, and the inhabitants began to build churches in every direction therein, and to plant the old woods and to make orchards and gardens and surround them with walls and ditches, and to construct walled buildings, and to support themselves from the fruit of the earth after the manner of the Romans. Gruffydd on his part

made great churches for himself in his chief places, and constructed courts and [gave] banquets constantly and honourably. Wherefore, he also made Gwynedd glitter then with limewashed churches like the firmament with stars. He ruled his people with a rod of iron."

Gruffydd was now growing old. In his later years he lost his sight, and we find, as we should expect, the direction of all military affairs falling to his sons Cadwallon, Owain, and Cadwalader, who, as we shall see, greatly strengthened the position of Gwynedd, though, indeed, Cadwalader was to prove far less worthy than his elder brothers. As time went on Gruffydd devoted his energies to works of mercy. He became a munificent benefactor of churches and religious foundations, and when at last he died, in 1137, at the very advanced age (for that time) of eighty-two, he left many bequests to religious houses, including twenty shillings to the Church of Christ in Dublin, where he was born.[1]

[1] It was in the time of Gruffydd that the Flemings came to Dyfed. The *Brut* has the following account of the settlement under date 1105 (the better date is 1108): "A certain nation, not recognized in respect of origin and manners, and unknown as to where it had been concealed in the island for a number of years, was sent by King Henry into the country of Dyfed. And that nation seized the whole cantred of Rhos, near the efflux of the river called Cleddyv, having driven off the people completely. That nation, as it is said, was derived from Flanders. . . . This was on account of the encroachment of the sea on their country, the whole region having been reduced to disorder and bearing no produce, owing to the sand cast into the land by the tide of the sea. At last, when they could get no space to inhabit, as the sea had passed over the maritime land, and the mountains were full of people, so that all could not dwell there on account of the multitude of men, and the scantiness of the land, that nation craved of King Henry and besought him to assign a place where they might dwell. And then they were sent into Rhos, expelling from thence the proprietary inhabitants, who thus lost their own country and place from that time until the present day."

# CHAPTER XV

## OWAIN GWYNEDD

1137–1170

THE years 1135–37 saw the deaths of Henry I of England and Gruffydd ap Cynan and Gruffydd ap Rhys of Wales. The death of the powerful Henry was instantly taken advantage of by the Welsh, who appear to have decided to make one great effort to rid themselves of their Norman conquerors. The uprising does not seem to have been entirely unexpected by the strangers resident in Wales, for according to Giraldus Cambrensis many of the Flemings of Dyfed, anticipating that the storm which threatened must shortly break and destroy them, had sold their possessions and abandoned their country of adoption for ever.

Their foresight was soon shown. Almost immediately after the death of Henry we find Howel ap Maredudd attacking the Norman and English colonists in Gower. A battle was fought somewhere near Swansea in 1136, in which the Welsh were victorious and inflicted a very heavy loss (for those days) upon their opponents. The news of the victory seems to have travelled with the rapidity of a forest fire. For the colonists it was hardly less terrible in its results. Gruffydd ap Rhys, who had struggled so long to rid Deheubarth of the Normans, now decided to adventure one more blow in the cause of freedom. To make more sure of success he appealed for help to Gwynedd, now, as we have seen, a flourishing and happy state under the peaceful rule of Gruffydd ap Cynan. Gruffydd of Gwynedd seems also to have realized that, the lion of England being dead, the time had come to rise up against the Normans. It was perhaps hardly Gruffydd who had the

deciding of the matter. Old and blind as he was, he had ceased to take any active part in the government of his country. The mantle of power had descended, however, on to shoulders quite as strong as his had been. Owain Gwynedd, so called to distinguish him from his contemporary Owain Cyfeiliog, was, as we shall see, a brave fighter, a valiant leader, a clear thinker, and a strong ruler. These qualities, only too rare in the princes of Wales, enabled him, in later years, to do great things for his country.

The journey of Gruffydd ap Rhys to Gwynedd was not fruitless. The sons of Gruffydd ap Cynan agreed to join him, and together the allies arranged to descend upon the Normans of the south. During Gruffydd ap Rhys' absence a misfortune had, however, befallen the Welsh arms. Gruffydd's lady, Gwenllian, spurred on by a patriot's zeal, had led a Welsh army against the castle of Cydweli (Kidwelly). The attempt was doomed to utter failure. Her army was attacked by Maurice, the Norman leader, and routed. The brave Amazon was herself slain, together with her young son Morgan, while another son was captured.

### Attacks upon the South Wales Marchers

Retribution quickly followed. The Norman leader in Ceredigion, Richard de Clare,[1] who had paid an unsuccessful visit to Stephen's court to request aid in defending the Norman possessions in South Wales, was returning to his lordship. Used to the peaceful times of Henry I, he seems to have ignored the warnings of Brian de Wallingford,[2] who had told him of the dangerous condition of affairs and had urged him to accept an armed escort. Richard de Clare, ignoring the warnings, plunged on into the woods, preceded by a minstrel and a singer, the former accompanying the latter on the fiddle, and protected only by a few followers. Murder overtook him in the thick woods of the vale of the Gronwy at Coed Grono, or Grwyne. One of the Welsh chronicles assigns the deed to Morgan ap Owain, a man of good

[1] Richard fitz Gilbert. [2] Brian fitz Count.

family and position, who had been wronged by Richard de Clare.

The Welsh now finally decided to combine and drive the Norman from Ceredigion. Owain and Cadwalader, sons of Gruffydd ap Cynan, and Howel ap Maredudd and Madog ap Idnerth seem to have allied themselves for the campaign, which took place in the early part of 1136. Toward the end of the year they were joined by Gruffydd ap Rhys.

The monk who wrote the *Brut y Tywysogion* gets quite hysterical with joy when describing the advance of the men of Gwynedd. Owain and Cadwalader are proclaimed to be "the ornament of all the Britons, their safety, their liberty, and their strength; the men who were two noble and two generous kings; two dauntless ones; two brave lions; two blessed ones; two eloquent ones; two wise ones; protectors of the churches and their champions; the defenders of the poor; the slayers of the foes . . . the safest refuge to all who should flee to them; the men who were pre-eminent in energies of souls and bodies; and jointly upholding in unity the whole kingdom of the Britons." Writing at Llanbadarn, he was near the scene of the exploits of his heroes, and seems to have viewed with unalloyed delight the ridding of the land of the Normans.

The first success gained was the burning of the castle of Walter de Bec at Llanfihangel. Thence the Gwyneddians marched to Aberystwyth, where they attacked and destroyed the castle of the Clares. It was now that the men of Gwynedd were joined by Howel and Madog. The castles of Richard de la Mere, of Dineirth, and of Caerwedros at Llwyn Dafydd were swept away.

## Destruction of Cardigan Town

For the moment there was a breathing-space. The Welsh returned to their homes laden with booty. But the respite was a short one. Toward the close of the year the allies, whose forces, as we have seen, were now augmented by those of Gruffydd ap Rhys, prepared to complete the work so well

begun. They now had at their disposal an army which, according to the *Brut y Tywysogion*, was composed of 6000 fine infantry and 2100 cavalry fully armed. The allies seem to have decided to strike at the Normans of South Wales in the stronghold of their power—Cardigan. We find the two armies meeting at Crug Mawr, near the mouth of the Teifi. The Normans, led by Stephen, constable of the castle, were supported by Robert fitz Martin, lord of Cemais, the sons of Gerald the Steward, William fitz Orc, and the Flemings and marcher settlers and the French from Aber Nedd to Aberteifi.

The battle which followed resulted in a glorious victory for the Welsh. The Normans broke and fled. Many were killed in the panic which followed, others were taken captive, and more than a thousand were drowned in the river Teifi owing to a bridge breaking as they were attempting to cross. The town of Cardigan was fired, and many a refugee who had fled from the battle was burnt in the town in which he had sought refuge. The castle, however, still stood. The Welsh contented themselves for the present with carrying away the costly spoil which was theirs as the fruit of their victory.

The unhappy refugees in Cardigan Castle were now in a parlous state. Stephen, unlike Henry I, was not the man to bring the Welsh to their knees. Yet something had to be done, and so we find him persuading Miles of Gloucester to undertake the relief of Cardigan Castle. Miles was successful in rescuing the widow of Richard fitz Gilbert and her people, but little else was done to avenge the destruction of the town of Cardigan. A punitive expedition was, it is true, fitted out shortly afterward, but it came to nothing.

### Renewed Welsh Attack Successful

In the following year (1137) the Welsh attack was renewed. Gruffydd ap Rhys raided the Flemish settlement in Dyfed and Rhos. The further progress of Gruffydd was stopped by his untimely death. How he died we do not know. At about the same time his namesake in the north also departed to the shades. He, however, had long been in retirement, and his

PLATE XL. BASINGWERK ABBEY 262

*Photo Lettsome & Sons, Llangollen*

death did not stay for a moment the operations of Owain and his brothers.

These energetic leaders of the men of Gwynedd again made Ceredigion the scene of their operations. Castles were burned at Ystrad Meurig and Llanstephen, Castle Humphry was also destroyed and Caermarthen was captured. The capture of this last fortress was, of course, an immense gain. A royal stronghold, its fall placed the whole of south-western Wales in the power of the captors and prevented the sending of any help to the recaptured provinces from England. Though it was invested in 1137, and although attacks were made on it by sea as well as by land, it did not fall for several years, but in the meantime Ceredigion was at the mercy of the attackers, who parcelled it out among the princes of Gwynedd or their natural children.

The Welsh now seem to have rested on their laurels. The Norman having been overcome, the Welsh princes are soon found fighting among themselves. We read that Cynvrig, son of Owain, was killed by the family of Madog ap Maredudd. Maredudd ap Howel was slain by the sons of Bleddyn in the year following. The two succeeding years saw the death of several more Welsh princes, and finally, in 1143, Anarawd, Gruffydd ap Rhys' eldest son, a youth of bright promise, " the hope and strength and glory of the men of South Wales," was killed by Cadwalader or his family.

This most impolitic act of folly brought down upon Cadwalader his brother Owain's anger. We can well understand Owain's distress. The house of Deheubarth had been his allies in the patriotic revolt of the preceding years. Anarawd was about to marry Owain's daughter. The whole success of the Welsh movement of independence depended upon the united action of the leaders of the Welsh royal houses. Owain seems to have taken the strongest view of Cadwalader's folly. The younger brother was, in fact, driven out of Ceredigion and had his castle at Aberystwyth burnt. Owain's anger even went further, and Cadwalader had to fly to Ireland to obtain the aid of mercenaries in order to prevent

himself being driven into permanent exile. Owain now seems to have felt that enough had been done to avenge the death of Anarawd, and a reconciliation was effected with his brother.

### Position in North Wales and Powysland

What exactly had been happening in parts of Wales other than those we have been considering we do not know. England was, of course, by now in the throes of the conflict which raged between Matilda and Stephen; a conflict in which the marcher lords were mainly on the side of Matilda (in this connexion it is interesting to note that the Welsh chronicler refers to Stephen in complimentary terms; he evidently hated the marchers more than the king). The result can but have been a weakening of the marcher grip on North and Central as well as Southern Wales. Again, Owain was certainly not a prince to let such a chance slip by. As to any actual victories or gains, we must, however, admit that the sources are almost silent on the point.[1]

The years 1143 and 1144 saw the Welsh forward movement checked in some measure. In 1144, the year which saw the drowning of some Welsh Crusaders in "the sea of Greece," the Normans gained a little of the ground which they had lost in the years immediately preceding. Thus Hugh fitz Raulf (Ranulf of Chester) repaired the castles of Gemacon and Colwyn, and reconquered Maelienydd and Elvael. In the year following Hugh Mortimer of Wigmore imprisoned Rhys ap Howel, one of the Welsh leaders, and captured many of his followers.

In the south, on the other hand, the Welsh, under the leadership of Owain's sons, were still pursuing their victorious way. Aberteifi was ravaged and much booty taken. A pitched battle seems to have been fought and won. A severe check to the Welsh successes was given, however, by Gilbert fitz Gilbert, who appears in 1145 to have reconquered Dyfed and to have rebuilt the castle of Caermarthen and another castle

[1] For some notes on minor engagements, such as the capture of Bromfield Castle, near Wrexham, see Lloyd, *History of Wales*, vol. ii, p. 477.

which is described in the *Brut* as belonging to the son of Uchtryd.

Meanwhile the men of Gwynedd had been pressing forward in the north. In 1146 Ranulf, now Earl of Chester, is found appealing to his king for support. The royal advisers appear to have regarded this very reasonable request as a traitorous trap laid by Ranulf against the safety of Stephen, and as a consequence the earl was seized and cast into prison. The result was that the Welsh were enabled to capture yet another Norman stronghold. At the close of the year Mold fell into their hands. This success (the chroniclers tell us that it had been frequently attacked without success) brought Owain out of the fit of deep melancholy into which he had been cast by the death of his son Rhun, who is described in the *Brut* as "the most praiseworthy young man of the British nation . . . fair of form and aspect, kind in conversation and affable to all, fair of complexion, with curly yellow hair, eyes somewhat blue, full and playful." It also made up for the defeat which the men of Gwynedd had sustained earlier in the year at the hands of Robert of Mold at Wich.

Some time before the Welsh had gained further successes in the south Cadell ap Gruffydd had reduced the castle of Dinweileir, and later in the same year (1146) he and Howel ap Owain overcame the castle of Caermarthen and placed Maredudd ap Gruffydd in charge of it as defender. He appears to have beaten back successfully an attempt at recapture made by the Normans and Flemings under the leadership of William fitz Aed and the sons of Gerald the Steward. In the year following (1147) we find Cadell and Howel again combining. This time the reduction of Castell Gwys (Wiston) was their objective. The attack was successful and Howel returned victorious.

### Conflicts between the Welsh

Cadwalader now appears on the scene again. This time he was in conflict with his nephews, Howel and Conan, sons of Owain. He seems to have regained some of his lost power in

Meirionydd and to have built a castle at Cynfael in the southern part of the cantref during the years of peace which had elapsed since his quarrel with Owain. What the cause of the dispute was between himself and his nephews we do not know, but in 1147 Howel and Conan advanced into Meirionydd, called out the men of the district, and proceeded to attack Cynfael Castle, now entrusted by Cadwalader to the charge of Morvan, abbot of Whitland (*y ty gwyn*, which, however, Professor Lloyd has suggested should read *y tywyn* and refers to Towyn). Howel and Conan, finding Morvan impervious to bribes, had to resort to force in order to obtain the castle, but at last were successful, and we read about this time of Cadwalader being driven out of Meirionydd.

Cadwalader still, however, retained some power. In 1149 he is found building a castle at Llanrhystud and portioning out part of Ceredigion to his son Cadwgan. The other Welsh princes were also busy in that year, consolidating their power and building castles in Yale (Iâl) and at Oswestry. In the year following Cadell ap Gruffydd repaired the castle of Caermarthen and ravaged Cydweli. The remainder of that year was devoted to disputes between the various branches of the house of Gwynedd.

Owain, meanwhile, was strengthening his grasp on the district around Mold. While the younger members of his family were disputing in the south and west he followed up the success gained by the capture of Mold Castle. A castle was built in the commote of Yale at Buddugre. Feeling himself secure in the north, he seems to have turned his attention to Powys, where Madog ap Maredudd's castle of Oswestry had, as we have seen, recently been rebuilt. This prince, who had been the principal ruler of Powys since Maredudd's death in 1132, did not hesitate to call in the aid of the Normans in his dispute with Owain. A battle was fought at Consyllt (Coleshill ?), in which the ever-victorious Owain was again successful and the auxiliaries and troops of Madog were put to flight. This victory greatly strengthened Owain's position in Yale and Tegeingl, and his power was

still further increased by the death of Earl Ranulf (poisoned as some thought, by Peverel of the Peak) in the following year, leaving as heir a child of tender years to guide the fortunes of Chester through those troublous times.

### Owain's Successes against Stephen

The years which follow were filled with unimportant squabbles between the various Welsh princes. The royal house of Deheubarth seems, during the years 1151–1153, to have been at feud with the sons of Owain Gwynedd. In 1151 they were successful in driving Howel ap Owain out of most of Ceredigion, though he still remained lord of a castle at Pengwern, in Llanfihangel. They also captured the castle of Llanrhystud, which was, however, regained by Howel shortly afterward. The sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys then turned their attention to Gower, burnt the castle of Aberllychwer, and devastated the surrounding lands.

In 1153 the men of Deheubarth gained further successes against Howel ap Owain. The castle at Penwedig (Castle Howel?) was demolished. Tenby was captured by a night attack and delivered over to the charge of the Norman William fitz Gerald; the castle at Ystrad Cyngen was laid waste and the castle at Aberafan burnt, its garrison slain, and valuable booty seized. An unhappy year ended with the ravaging of Cyfeiliog. In 1156 Rhys of Deheubarth pushed on as far as Aberdovey, while on the eastern border Madog of Powys built the castle of Caereinion.

We have mentioned these unimportant details in order to estimate justly the position of Owain Gwynedd at the close of Stephen's reign. In the south he appears to have delegated the command to his sons, of whom Howel and Conan seem to have been the most energetic. Their arms met with alternate successes and reverses, so that at the time we have now reached their position was not very different from that which was theirs at the commencement of the struggle. In the north Owain himself was in command. Here the position was very different. With one or two trifling exceptions his progress

had been uninterrupted, and the exceptions had occurred during the time when he was prostrated by the death of his son Rhun. Molesdale and the neighbouring districts had been brought under his sway; his possessions had continually increased toward the east, so that by now the ancient Roman town of Chester was within sight of his outposts. Powys had been humbled and Earl Ranulf's power had been reduced.

The condition of affairs was, indeed, becoming serious from the point of view of the English Government. Throughout the anarchy of Stephen's reign Wales had been practically abandoned by the English king and the marcher lords. These latter had been prominent participators in the struggle, and had paid but little attention to their home affairs, and it is not to be marvelled at that the Welsh princes had taken full advantage of the slackening of the grip which had almost strangled their national life in the time of Henry I.

### Conflict with Henry II

No great credit would be due to Owain Gwynedd if the list of his achievements had stopped with the death of Stephen. We could but have regarded him as an opportunist who had taken advantage of the temporary weakness of the English monarchy to snatch a temporary gain. It is for his leadership and prudence in the struggle with Henry, a man of very different mould from Stephen and one of the most powerful kings of his day, that we must award to Owain the eminent position which is admittedly his in the history of his country.

The death of Stephen in 1154 did not see immediately any attempt at the reconquest of Wales. England herself was in a state of complete disorder. Henry's title, based as it was largely on treaty rights, had to be established fully. His wide French possessions required his attention. It was necessary for him to bring into subjection many of the unruly barons whose adulterine castles and lawless behaviour had rendered the lives of the commoners of England well-nigh unbearable for years. Two of these barons, the marcher lords Roger Earl

of Hereford and Hugh Mortimer of Wigmore, had, in the first year of Henry's reign, broken out into rebellion, but seem to have recognized that Henry was no Stephen, and early made their peace with the king, though Hugh did not surrender until the capture of his castle at Bridgnorth. It was not until 1157 that, the preliminary work having been done, Henry was free at last to turn his attention to Wales.

Henry seems to have decided to leave nothing undone which would aid him in the complete conquest of the Cymry. A special levy was raised, and, arrangements having been made whereby a long term of service was assured, a fleet was collected in order to enable a joint attack to be launched against Wales by land and sea. An alliance was contracted with Cadwalader of Gwynedd, who, as we have seen, had been constantly at war with his brother Owain, and had been driven out of Anglesey and the mainland of Wales in 1153. Cadwalader had other reasons for being partial to the English side. He had married into the famous Norman house of Clare, and he had been maintained by Henry since his banishment. Though from a patriot's point of view his conduct was, and always had been, atrocious, it was not simply perverse and foolish. Finally Henry strengthened his already considerable force with archers from Shropshire, who might be expected to understand the mode of fighting which would have to be adopted in the mountains and valleys of Wales.

It seems to us to be evident, from a consideration of the campaign which followed, that Owain expected defeat and was only too ready to purchase peace with the sacrifices demanded of him, sacrifices which, though not great, were, we believe, greater than Henry's campaign warranted.

The English king, though prepared for a lengthy struggle, seems to have determined, with the boldness of youth, to attempt a *coup de main* which would bring Owain at once to his knees. Sending his main army along the northern coast road from Chester and directing the fleet to make for Rhuddlan, the king himself plunged into the forest of Cennadlog,[1]

[1] Coleshill, according to Giraldus Cambrensis.

accompanied only by a few lightly armed troops. The plan was a bold, even a reckless, one, and was like to have cost the king his life.

Owain, who, following his father's tactics, had collected the whole of his available resources and had encamped at Basingwerk, fortified his camp with earthworks and prepared for a pitched battle. It was against this encampment of Owain's that the northern army had been sent, Henry at the same time attempting to reach the same place by taking the shorter route through the forests. Henry undoubtedly expected that this bold move would take Owain completely by surprise. It did not. On the other hand, Henry was caught unawares by David and Conan, sons of Owain. A furious fight took place in the "trackless wood." The Constable of Chester and Robert de Courcy were slain. Henry himself would have been killed but for the bravery of Roger of Hereford. Panic seized the English standard-bearer, Henry of Essex, Constable of England, who fled. At last, however, the king gathered his scattered forces together and escaped into the open fields again.

It was in connexion with this fight in the wood of Coleshill that a pathetic incident occurred of which Giraldus speaks. According to the story he relates, it appears that a young Welshman was killed "while passing through the king's army." A greyhound which accompanied him, seeing its master fall, stayed by his side, and did not desert the corpse for eight days, though without food. Faithfully it guarded the lifeless body from the attacks of dogs, wolves, and birds of prey. When the English soldiery came up they found the dog, now almost starved to death, still keeping guard. Giraldus adds: "As a mark of favour to the dog . . . the English, although bitter enemies of the Welsh, ordered the body . . . to be deposited in the ground with the accustomed offices."

Owain, meanwhile, uncertain of the success or failure of his sons, and fearing to be outflanked, hesitated to accept the attacks in front and rear which threatened him. He retreated without giving battle. Henry, meanwhile, had rejoined his

main army and proceeded to Rhuddlan "in a rage," as the Welsh chronicler tells us.

Henry's reverses were, however, by no means at an end. Owain, now encamped in front of Llwyn Pina (identified by Powel with Bryn-y-pin), continually harassed Henry by day and night. Owain, meanwhile, had obtained the aid of Madog of Powys,[1] so that almost the whole of north-eastern Wales was encamped around Henry. Meanwhile the sea attack had been a failure, for the marines, after some few successes against churches in Môn, were forced by the men of Anglesey to fight. The battle resulted in complete victory for the Welsh. Henry, a son of Henry I by Nest of Pembroke, was slain, Robert fitz Stephen was wounded, and many of the Norman leaders were killed.

Henry, hearing of this ill news, seems to have decided to abandon the whole campaign. Peace upon terms was offered to Owain, and accepted. Henry had gained no single victory on land or sea, but Owain was wise enough to see that he was no match for the ruler of well-nigh all France and England and Scotland if it came to a real struggle for supremacy. He therefore agreed to give hostages for good behaviour, to relinquish Tegeingl and restore to Cadwalader his former possessions. About the same time Iorwerth the Red, son of Maredudd of Powys, burned the castle of Buddugre, in Yale, but recently built, as we have seen, by Owain.

It was now that Owain showed himself to be something more than the brave chieftain of a clan. Realizing that times had changed and that open resistance was useless, he abandoned defiance and resisted the temptation to pick quarrels with the Norman marchers.

## Position in South Wales

Meanwhile in the south the sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys, of Deheubarth, had been indulging in a perfect orgy of fighting. These sons of Rhys were typical Welsh chieftains. Brave, daring, filled with a passionate hatred of the Normans, they

[1] See as to this p. 273.

devoted their time to castle-razing. As time passed it became with them almost a hobby. The presence of a castle, Norman or Welsh, which did not belong to them seems to have filled them with a longing to destroy it. Mabudryd, Caermarthen, Gwys, Tenby, Aberafan, Llanrhystud, had been burnt or captured. The years had been full of danger, and two of the brave three, Cadell and Maredudd, early met with injuries, injuries which cost the one his life, the other his valour. Maredudd was but twenty-five when he died. He left his younger brother, Rhys, sole heir to Deheubarth (Maredudd had lost his nerve owing to his wounds and had turned pious). Young though Rhys was, he came of a brave race, and was destined to live for many years the champion of South Wales and its redoubtable protector against the might of England.

While Henry was launching his army against Owain in the north Rhys was ravaging the south. The day of reckoning had, however, come. Young Rhys, lacking the older Owain's wisdom, failed to bow before the storm and prepared to resist. We believe that history has few finer examples of reckless bravery than this of young Rhys, a mere lad, entrenching himself and his clansmen in the forests of South Wales, prepared to meet alone and without allies the might of Henry, king or duke not only of England, but of almost all France and Scotland. At last, however, wiser counsels prevailed and Rhys made submission. As a result of the terms of peace the Clares and the Cliffords came back to South Wales. Earl Roger of Hereford, son of Richard fitz Gilbert, crept back to Ceredigion to seize under the shadow of the king what for twenty-two years he had been unable to take for himself. Castles at Ystrad Meurig, Aberdovey, Dineirth, and Llanrhystud and Castle Humphry reverted to the Normans. Cantref Bychan and Llandovery went once more to the Cliffords. The Normans had thus won back in South Wales almost all that had been gained. The Welsh, however, soon renewed the attack. Castle Humphry was again destroyed, and a campaign commenced against the new Norman lords

and many castles were burnt. Henry, however, again interposed, Rhys submitted, and peace was made.

## Powys

In the meantime Madog of Powys had died in 1160. We find this Madog referred to as the ally of England in the recent campaign against Owain. The evidence for this is, however, doubtful. The *Brut y Tywysogion*, dealing with the events of 1157, tells us that after Henry had reached Rhuddlan and Owain had encamped in front of Llwyn Pina, "Madog, son of Maredudd, lord of Powys, selected his position for encamping between the army of the king and the army of Owain, so as to enable him to meet the first attack made by *the king*." The *Annales Cambriae* is silent on the subject, save that in one text we have the words "*Henricus . . . ad campestria Cestriae duxit . . . adjuvante Madauc . . . et venit ad Dynas Basic.*" We also find that a payment was made by the sheriff of Shropshire in that year to "Maddock, £8 10s." The *Brut Saeson* also gives Madog charge of the fleet. Again, Madog's brother, Iorwerth the Red, did certainly attack Owain's castle in Yale. On the other hand, Madog lost Oswestry Castle, which he had built, and which was given by Henry to William fitz Alan. He gained nothing by the terms of peace, although Cadwalader, who, we know, was on Henry's side, was most carefully provided for by Henry when drafting the terms. Again, if Madog was a traitor to his country, a person who would sell his help for £8 10s., how are we to account for the entry in the *Brut*, where we have a glowing account of him, his bravery and his beauty? Further, how can we account for the friendship which clearly subsisted between Powys and Gwynedd in 1160 if we are to regard Madog as having been opposed to Owain in 1157? These considerations leave us doubtful as to Madog's attitude in 1157. For his sake we trust he was found on the side of his countrymen. Welsh historians have been less kind to him. He is portrayed as one of Henry's allies. Ally or no ally, his death made little difference to Owain's policy; he still pursued his policy of peace.

The death of Madog did, however, have one considerable result. Powys was no longer ruled by one man, but was split up into a number of small lordships. It was divided among Owain Cyfeiliog, Iorwerth the Red, Gruffydd, Owain Vychan (' the Little'), and Owain Brogyntyn. The result, for our purpose, was twofold—Powys was weakened and the doings of its chieftains became so petty as hardly to deserve attention. To show how little love the house of Powys had for Henry, despite the imagined alliance of 1157, the year 1163 saw the destruction of the royal castle of Carreghofa.

### Henry's Third Expedition

In 1162 the old-time enmity between Powys and Gwynedd was renewed. One of Owain's castles was seized; but the turn soon came. Owain moved an army into Arwystli as far as Llandinam and inflicted a severe loss on the Powysians. Shortly afterward Owain's son, David, made an attack upon Tegeingl, which he ravaged and denuded of its population and cattle, taking the latter with him into the Vale of Clwyd. This, of course, was practically a tearing up of the peace of 1157. Henry instantly took steps to punish these troublesome princes. Henry had, indeed, good cause to complain. Not only in the north had his subjects been harassed. Rhys of Deheubarth had been a sore thorn in the side of the marchers of South Wales for years, and had constantly required Henry's attention. The English king seems, indeed, to have decided on a thorough and final conquest. As the Welsh chronicler tells us, he " collected a vast army of the choice warriors of England, Normandy, Flanders, Anjou, Gascony, and all Britain, and came to Oswestry, proposing to transport and destroy the whole of the Britons." This, of course, is exaggeration. Henry did, however, make considerable preparations. The sheriffs of London alone paid nearly £170 for shields and clothing for the campaign, a very large sum for those days. Troops were requisitioned from many of Henry's Continental dominions, heavy cavalry was collected, large stores and all the armoury of war were assembled and

sent down to Shrewsbury. Danish mercenaries from Dublin were engaged to harass Gwynedd by sea. All was complete and the struggle had commenced by May of 1165.

### The Welsh Reply

Whether or not there were traitors in the struggle of 1157, now all Wales stood together facing the national peril. Owain, with his brother Cadwalader, led Gwynedd; Rhys of Deheubarth led the men of the south. Powys was captained by Owain Cyfeiliog, Iorwerth the Red, and all the sons of Madog. "Together, united and undaunted, they came into Edeyrnion, and encamped at Corwen."

There is something very fine in all this. One's sympathy always goes out to the weaker side, and Wales, small in the number of its people, poor in the quality of its soil, had waged so plucky, so gallant a fight for so many years against its more powerful neighbour. The Saxons had come and had been beaten back; the Normans had come and had been resolutely opposed for well-nigh a century. Meanwhile these fighting folk found time to slay each other. But now, in a time of grave national peril, Wales lost its name and became once more Cymru, the land of the Britons. Side by side these men who but a few short months ago had been fighting one another prepared to meet their common enemy.

Owain Gwynedd, now the leader of Cymru, kept back his main host, and at the same time sent forward a few chosen warriors to attack and harass the onward march of the king. Henry, meanwhile, from his base at Oswestry, to which town he had journeyed from Shrewsbury, struck across the mountains into the woods of the Vale of Ceiriog. As before, once in the forests of Wales, Henry was as one lost. The skirmishers whom Owain had sent out to harass him eagerly seized this opportunity to inflict heavy loss at little cost. Henry, indeed, found it necessary to have the woods cleared, so dangerous were they to his progress. At last, however, he emerged from the valley and commenced the passage of the Berwyn range. These mountains, as those who have travelled

in North Wales know, rise quickly from the plains to a considerable altitude. Their sides, bleak and barren, offer little or no cover to an advancing army; the range is so continuous that a general must look in vain for passes through which to lead his army in safety. Henry's progress was not unopposed, but he succeeded in encamping the advance posts of his forces in the mountains of Berwyn. It was while here that he was overtaken by storms of rain, which made the mountains impassable and prevented supplies of food from being brought from his base.

Henry, realizing that his position was becoming one of danger, decided to retreat. We can imagine his ire. Of all the kings of England, no one is more noted for his furious temper, and we are told that he sometimes raged in anger like a maniac. This was one of those occasions. His wrath fell directly upon the hostages whom Owain had given after the earlier campaign; these, to the number of twenty-two, he blinded. The unhappy men numbered among them many of Wales's noblest princes, including two sons of Owain and one son of Rhys ap Gruffydd (who must have been but a child at the time).

Henry now abandoned the whole campaign. The Irish mercenaries were paid off and the king returned to England.

### Welsh Success in South Wales

The danger past, the Welsh chieftains parted, each returning to his own country. Rhys of Deheubarth was the first to take advantage of the Berwyn *débâcle*. Cardigan Castle was attacked, and, after being betrayed by a Welsh cleric to Rhys, was burned and much booty taken. Rhys then seized the Carew castle of Cilgerran and imprisoned Robert fitz Stephen. He had by now regained almost all that he had lost during his earlier struggles with Henry.

Several attempts were subsequently made by the Normans and Flemings to retake Cilgerran, but without success, and Rhys remained master of Ceredigion and south-western Wales.

### Welsh Success in North Wales

While these successes were being gained in the south Owain was not idle in the north, for we find him destroying Basingwerk Castle. Meanwhile there was trouble in the house of Powys. Owain Cyfeiliog and Owain Vychan drove out Iorwerth the Red, and in the next year Owain Cyfeiliog was himself dispossessed of Caereinion by Owain Gwynedd, Cadwalader, and Rhys of Deheubarth. Caereinion was given to Owain Vychan, but Owain Cyfeiliog shortly afterward attacked it again and destroyed it.

Owain, Cadwalader, and Rhys now turned their attention to Rhuddlan Castle. This stronghold had since Robert of Rhuddlan's time been the chief of the outlying posts of the Normans in North Wales. The garrison, after resisting for three months, during which time no aid arrived from England, capitulated, and the castle was burnt. The same fate befell Prestatyn, and the Welsh princes, well satisfied with their autumn campaign, returned to celebrate Christmas with rejoicings.

Tegeingl was now again joined to Gwynedd, and Owain, by a rare mixture of strength, bravery, and caution, had extended his dominions from the Dovey to the Dee.

His end was now approaching. Two years after the capture of Rhuddlan, after a time of general peace so rare in Wales, Owain Gwenydd, " a man of great celebrity, and of the most extraordinary sagacity, nobleness, fortitude, and bravery," died. The last year of his life was troubled by a dispute with the Church, but he was absolved upon his deathbed.

# CHAPTER XVI

## THE LORD RHYS

THE death of Owain Gwynedd in 1170 opened the way for the rise to pre-eminence of his energetic fellow-prince, Rhys of Deheubarth, or Rhys ap Gruffydd ('the Lord Rhys'—*yr Arglwydd Rhys*). We have already had occasion to mention examples of his bravery and his daring. Until now, however, the northern prince had held the central position on the stage of Welsh history. It may be that Owain was fortunate in having for the seat of his power the more rugged north, where, guarded by the mountains of Eryri, he could look out with comparative safety on the attempted aggressions of the English and upon the abortive punitive expeditions of Henry. Rhys, on the other hand, held sway in the comparatively flat lands of the south, and so, quite apart from questions of military competence, was exposed in greater measure than Owain to hostile attacks from England.

Again, owing to the natural military strength of northern Wales, Owain had, so to speak, a handicap in the race for chieftaincy, an advantage which he was not slow to take, and one which, as we have seen, resulted in his being well-nigh supreme among the chieftains of Cymru.

Rhys, however, even in his earlier years, had not been idle, nor had he taken a very secondary share in the movements which had almost freed Wales from the dominion of the marchers. Born about 1132, as early as 1146, when but a boy, he had assisted Cadell, his brother, in the capture of castles at Dinweileir, Caermarthen, and Llanstephen. In the year following he joined in the attack on Wiston Castle. In 1150 he was to the forefront in the movement which resulted

in the expulsion of Owain's son, Howel, from South Ceredigion. Of the years which followed, which saw the conquest of North Ceredigion, the capture of Tenby, and the destruction of the castles of Aberafan and Ystrad Cyngen, we have already spoken.

The year 1153, when Cadell was absent on a pilgrimage, leaving his possessions in the charge of his younger brothers, Maredudd and Rhys, marked an advancement in Rhys' fortunes. These were still further improved by the untimely death of Maredudd in 1155. Rhys was now ruler of Dyfed, Ceredigion, and Ystrad Tywi, though, of course, important parts of those districts were still held by marcher lords, chief of whom may be reckoned the Clares.

### Rhys attacks the Marchers

The year 1158 saw Rhys' first serious conflict with the English king. As we have seen, he submitted on terms, having been persuaded by fair promises. These promises, as we know, were not kept, and the Cliffords and Clares came back once more into power in Ceredigion. The result was a campaign of castle-razing undertaken by Rhys against these lords. The castle of Llandovery, then in the hands of the Cliffords, was captured, and the Clares' castle in Ceredigion was burnt. In 1159 more castles were destroyed in Dyfed, and siege was laid to Caermarthen Castle itself. This siege was, however, unsuccessful. Rhys was compelled by the relieving force under Reginald, Earl of Cornwall, to abandon all present hope of taking this stronghold.

This force, which was composed of French, Normans, Flemings, and English, combined with a Welsh contingent from the north in a counter-attack upon Rhys in the latter part of the same year, and Rhys was closely beset in his castle of Dinweileir. He was, however, strong enough to keep the castle, despite the fact that his enemies numbered among themselves, besides the Earl of Cornwall, the Earl of Bristol, and the Clares, the Welsh leaders Cadwalader and Howel and Conan of Gwynedd, who doubtless were seeking to revenge themselves for previous defeats. A truce was patched up,

and, in the words of the chronicler, the enemies of Rhys "returned home with unemployed hands."

### Rhys submits to Henry

Rhys next comes into prominence in 1163, when Henry II led an army into South Wales to reduce him to obedience. The Welsh, conquered by superstition, offered no resistance to Henry's advance. A prophecy attributed to Merlin, to the effect that a freckled man who crossed the Ford of Pencarn would bring disaster to their land, had long been known to the men of Deheubarth. This ford at the time of Henry's coming had long been disused, but the king's horse, frightened by the blast of a trumpet, shied, refused the usual crossing, cantered along the bank of the stream, and plunged into the water at the ancient ford. With this dark omen before him, and doubtless also persuaded by his isolated position and Henry's might, Rhys submitted, and returned with the king to England, where, later in the year, he did homage to his overlord at the Council of Woodstock.

The next year was to show, however, that his homage was but a form, his fealty mere lip-service. Hardly was he back in Wales when he commenced to burn and destroy more castles in Dyfed. In the year following, as we have seen, he was one of the band of patriots who gathered at Corwen among the mountains of the north to resist the attempted subjugation of their land by Henry. How that expedition failed, beaten by Wales's impregnable mountains and the fury of the elements, together with the bravery of Owain's advance posts, we have already stated. The Welsh princes were not slow to mark the weakness of the king; all made renewed efforts to cast off the yoke which was threatening to bear them down, and in this movement Rhys was by no means the least energetic or the least successful.

Cardigan Castle and Cilgerran were laid siege to and taken, as we have seen. Rhys was again master of Ceredigion. In 1167 he was again in league with Owain, this time first against Powys, and later in the successful attack upon Rhuddlan

Castle. In 1168 he was busy building a castle at Aber Einion and invading Brecknock.

Thus we see that in the years when Owain was the admitted leader of the Welsh Rhys in the south was doing many redoubtable things, and, when joint action was necessary, was to be found a trusty lieutenant in support of Owain. With the death of Owain in 1170 the lieutenant became the general. In the years which follow the Lord Rhys is the most powerful figure in Wales. There was another and more important event which happened in that year which greatly strengthened the hands of all Henry's enemies. The murder of Becket, resulting as it did in the virtual banishment of the king from the hearts and love of all good men, made England's ruler for years impotent to aid or harm. England's weakness was always, in those days, Wales's strength, and Rhys was ever ready to take advantage of the dipping of the balance.

There was yet another cause which advanced the power of the Welsh, particularly the Welsh of the south. The years 1166–70 had seen the departure of several important marcher lords from South Wales to Ireland, where they had espoused the cause of Dermot, king of Leinster. One of these, Richard of Clare, had prospered so well that on the death of Dermot in 1171 Richard was nominated his successor. Henry II now determined to take a hand in the struggle. With the memories of Stephen's reign ever present, it is little wonder that he looked with no great favour on this quick advancement to kingly power of one of his barons.

The king, having collected a large force with which to bring Richard to submission, prepared to cross over to Ireland from Milford Haven. Richard, however, made peace, and the movement is only of importance to us since it resulted in a compact being made between Henry and Rhys. The Welsh prince, though having to give hostages and pay a fine, was taken back into full favour. The possessions which Rhys had won were formally recognized as his, and he was soon afterward made a justice of Deheubarth. His son Howel, who had been a hostage for many years, was also released.

### Henry's Pilgrimage to St. David's

It was after Henry's return from Ireland that the king made his famous pilgrimage to the shrine of St. David. According to Giraldus, he proceeded to the holy place in the guise of a pilgrim, on foot, and staff in hand. While the solemn procession which had been formed was proceeding on its way we are told that a woman whose petition to the king had been ignored, in the passionate manner peculiar to the Celts of all times, shouted out, with a loud voice, the imprecation: "Avenge us this day, Lechlawar! Avenge our race and nation on this man!" The reference was to a prophecy of Merlin's (according to vulgar belief) to the effect that a king of England returning through Menevia after the conquest of Ireland should die on Lechlawar ('the Speaking-stone'), a block of marble forming a bridge over a stream on the way to St. David's. The king, having arrived at 'the Speaking-stone,' after a momentary hesitation boldly crossed over. Finding, doubtless to his intense relief—for he had his share of superstitious belief—that he was still alive, he said with some indignation: "Who now will have any faith in that liar Merlin?" So saying, he entered the church, paid his devotions, and heard Mass solemnly celebrated.

### The Power of Rhys Established

After the departure of Henry, Rhys, now his overlord's friend, was in a position of great strength in the south. This friendship was advanced shortly afterward by the aid which the lord of Deheubarth gave to Henry during the revolt against the king which took place in 1173. His son Howel Sais ('the Englishman'—in reference to his long sojourn in England as a hostage) was sent to aid the king in France, and later Rhys sent troops to support the king's cause both in England and on the Continent. Rhys' position is perhaps best shown by the events of 1175. Henry had now returned from France, the revolt headed by his sons had been subdued, Becket's death was beginning to fade, in some slight degree,

from men's minds. The time had come to settle the affairs of the kingdom. At the council held at Gloucester, among other important matters the condition of Wales was fully considered. Rhys was summoned, and by the advice of the king (according to the *Brut*) he took with him all the princes of the south. The meeting seems to have been mutually satisfactory. The princes returned peaceably to their country. One of them, Iorwerth ap Owain, who had been deprived of Caerleon by Henry some years before, had it returned to him, and Rhys was advanced yet farther into King Henry's favour. The chronicler, indeed, tells us that he was "the most beloved friend of the king at that time." His friendship was of value to his own country while still being of assistance to England.

South Wales was, indeed, settling down into a state of amity with England. Under Rhys' guidance it prospered for many years. The feuds of the past could not, however, be forgotten in a moment. This very year which saw the peaceful return of the chieftains from Gloucester witnessed in Wales an act of unusual barbarity. In the early part of the year Henry, a brother of Earl Roger of Hereford who had succeeded to the lordships of Brecknock and Upper Gwent, was slain by Seisyll ap Dyfnwal, one of the princes in Rhys' train, and one who had married into Rhys' family, his wife Gwladus being that prince's sister. On Seisyll's return from Gloucester, Henry's nephew, William of Breose, now lord of Abergavenny, avenged his uncle's death by murdering Seisyll and his son Gruffydd, whom he had lured to his castle to hear a royal ordinance read. Not content with this act of treachery, William sent men to the court of Seisyll, where they seized Gwladus and her young child, Cadwalader, a seven-year-old boy, whom they slew in his mother's arms. We are not surprised to find our chronicler writing that as a result of this double act of infamy "none of the Welsh dared trust to the French."

Meanwhile during this tragic year some terrible deeds had been committed around Caerleon. The times are too refined to permit us to relate the mutilations practised by Howel of

Caerleon on his uncle Owain Pencarwn. About the same time Gwynedd was also witnessing a bitter struggle between contending factions of the same house. Owain's sons were effecting what Rhys' sons were also destined to accomplish—the break-up of the ordered state which the wisdom of their father had brought about. At the moment David ap Owain had succeeded in fettering his brother Rhodri to some dungeon wall. Rhodri soon escaped, however, and the end of the year saw David expelled from Môn and Gwynedd and driven over the river Conway.

### Rhys a Patron of the Arts

Leaving these petty doings of little tyrants, we must return to the Lord Rhys. Like Gruffydd ap Cynan, now that he had reached a position of power he is found turning from the rude severities of war to the more gentle arts of peace. Like the great leader of Gwynedd, he seems to have been a patron of bardism and music. In 1176, after the return from Gloucester, he held a grand festival at his castle of Aberteifi, at which he appointed two competitions, one between bards and poets, and the other between the harpers, fiddlers (*chrythoryon*), pipers, and various other performers of instrumental music. We are also told that he assigned two chairs for the victors in the contests, which he enriched "with vast gifts." It is interesting to note that the men of the south won the chair for music, the men of the north that for poetry—a division of talent which not improbably lives on to-day.

### Death of Henry II

The next few years were quite uneventful in the south, though disputes in the north and in Powys were still raging. We gather that Rhys was continuing to consolidate his power, and in 1177 we hear of his erecting a castle at Rhaiadr Gwy. In 1187 his son Maelgwn appears to have carried out a small raid which resulted in the ravaging and burning of Tenby. This seems to have been directed against the Flemings, and evidently caused great delight to the compiler of the *Brut*,

who refers to Maelgwn in most glowing terms, calling him "the shield and strength of all the south," and likening him to a lion.[1] It is probable that the son was bidding to outshine the father. However that may be, in 1189 we find Rhys imprisoning Maelgwn, now referred to as "the light, and beauty, and courtesy, and shield, and strength, and liberty of all the south and the terror of the Saxons, the best knight, second to Gwalchmai."

It was in this year (1189) that Henry of England died. The date was an important one for Wales, since it commenced a period of weak government for England. Richard the Crusader, fired by the preaching of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, was away. Never at home in England, he was an example of a brave and chivalrous man who came near to being one of our worst kings. Followed by the anarchy of John and the minority of Henry III, Richard's accession commenced an era when Wales ceased to bow before the strength of the English king. For many decades, indeed, Wales was virtually independent. These years we must now hastily consider.

In the very year in which Henry died we find the Lord Rhys taking possession of the castles of St. Clear, Aber Corran, and Llanstephen. He also about this time ravaged Penfro Rhos and Gower, and three years later the castle of Llannhadein fell into his hands. To recount all the minor happenings of this time would be tedious, but it is desirable to point out the general trend of events, so that the era of the Llywelyns may be understood.

### Position of Wales after the Death of Henry

At or about this time the three main divisions of Wales were controlled by the Lord Rhys, who governed Deheubarth, Gwenwynwyn of Powys, and Llywelyn ap Iorwerth of Gwynedd. Of these Rhys was undoubtedly the predominant personality at the time of Henry's death. He was, however, growing old. He was not less than fifty-seven years of age—and men grew old quickly in those troublous times. There were signs,

[1] There is every reason to believe that Maelgwn was worthy of this eulogy.

indeed, that the once strong hand was losing its firmness. His sons had for years been causing their father and their country much trouble and some loss. As we have seen, in 1189 Maelgwn had to be imprisoned. In 1193 we find Maelgwn (who had escaped from prison in 1192), together with his brother Howel Sais, demolishing the castle of Llannhadein, which their father had taken the year before. It began to appear as though Rhys' power in the south was breaking up. A feud was already beginning among his sons.[1]

It was not, however, until 1194 that the sons began to get the upper hand. In that year Rhys was imprisoned by them in Nevern Castle. In the intervening years, it is true, he had won some more victories against his foreign enemies, and in 1189, when he journeyed to Oxford to pay homage to Richard I, he retained sufficient of his old courage and spirit to return to his country furious with rage and without having acknowledged his overlord, because Richard had failed to make a special journey to Oxford to meet him.

The imprisonment of 1194 seems to have destroyed his prestige for the moment. Though liberated by his son Howel Sais, he found himself in the year following the object of a plot to depose him in favour of his sons Maredudd and Rhys. This he suppressed by the imprisonment of the pretenders, and in 1196 embarked once more on a short but victorious campaign of destruction. Caermarthen was destroyed, Colwyn Castle captured and burnt; Radnor town was ravaged and destroyed by fire; Roger Mortimer was defeated in a pitched battle; and Pain's Castle, in Elfael, was taken. This was the last outburst of a brave and fiery spirit who for more than half a century had led the men of the south against the enemies of his country. He died in 1197, while still under sentence of excommunication for insults inflicted by his sons upon Peter de Leia—an ill end for the bountiful benefactor

[1] The *Brut y Tywysogion* under (corrected) date 1193 states that toward the end of that year a certain Anarawd ap Rhys seized Madog and Howel, his brothers, and blinded them. This is quite a different family from that of the Lord Rhys.

PLATE XLI. THE GATEWAY, STRATA FLORIDA ABBEY 286

*Photo Culliford, Aberystwyth*

of Strata Florida, for the liberal donor of gifts to Whitland and Talley Abbeys. At length, however, the last sacred words were said over his body, over that unheeding corpse which had been scourged to purge the soul of the offences of others.

## Gwenwynwyn and Llywelyn

We must now turn once more to a consideration of affairs in the north and east. In the north Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, called in later time Llywelyn the Great, was a very young man slowly rising to power, laboriously engaged in uniting his disrupted country and in resisting the encroachments of the equally ambitious, but less able, Gwenwynwyn of Powys.

This Gwenwynwyn, though destined never to attain real greatness, had in him many of the qualities which had distinguished Rhys in his earlier years. Brave and passionate, he was an admirable leader of revolt, and on the death of Rhys the leadership of the Welsh seems to have passed to this chieftain of South Powys rather than to Llywelyn.

In 1195 Owain Cyfeiliog, of whom we have already spoken, weary of the burdens of government, had entered a monastery, as so many nobles did in those days. His retirement opened the way for his successor, Gwenwynwyn. Almost at once Owain's pacific policy was abandoned. Attacks were made on the border counties. So serious was the position that Hubert Walter, now Justiciar, thought it necessary to lead an army in person against the men of Powys. Gwenwynwyn's castle of Trallwng, or Pool, was attacked and undermined. The priestly soldier was, however, chivalrous He allowed the garrison to go freely, a clemency which was repaid in the following year, when Gwenwynwyn recovered possession of his own and was equally magnanimous to his foe.

The Prince of South Powys now turned his attention to his own Welsh neighbours. At first Arwystli was the object of attack. This cantref, after an unimportant campaign, fell into his hands about 1197. Next Deheubarth claimed his attention. The Lord Rhys was now dead, and his sons

Gruffydd and Maelgwn (now an exile) were disputing as to the right of succession. Gwenwynwyn took the side of the exiled claimant. Aberystwyth town and castle were attacked and seized. Ceredigion was taken, with all its castles, and Gruffydd himself was captured and flung into Corfe Castle. In the year following the tables were turned. After some preliminary reverses, in which Maelgwn captured the castles of Aberteifi and Ystrad Meurig, Gruffydd succeeded in completely shattering, for the time being, his brother's hopes of leadership. We have seen that Gruffydd had been imprisoned. The change of fortune came about as follows. After the *débâcle* of 1197 Gwenwynwyn had apparently banished Gruffydd to England or imprisoned him in England. In the following year Gwenwynwyn, "endeavouring the restoration of their ancient rights to the Welsh, their original property and their boundaries," collected a considerable force and attempted the reduction of Pain's Castle. Unequipped as he was with the necessary engines of war, he made little headway. This lack of success coming to the ears of Gruffydd prompted him to offer to lead his English gaolers to the relief of their fellow-countrymen. The offer was accepted. Gruffydd at the head of a considerable force of English soldiers attacked the besieging army and defeated it with considerable loss. Having regained his liberty, and elated by this first success, Gruffydd lost little time in wresting from Maelgwn all the gains of the previous campaigns, except the castles of Aberteifi and Ystrad Meurig. As to the former important castle, the *Brut* tells us that "Maelgwn swore upon several relics, in the presence of monks, after taking hostages for peace from Gruffydd, that he would deliver up the castle and hostages together to Gruffydd on a fixed day. And that oath he disregarded, giving up neither the castle nor the hostages; divine power, nevertheless, set the hostages free from the prison of Gwenwynwyn." The climax came in 1200, two years afterward, when, as the chronicler tells us, "Maelgwn, son of Rhys, sold Aberteifi, the key of all Wales, for a trifling value, to the English, for fear of and out of hatred of his brother Gruffydd."

In the next year death removed Gruffydd from the scene. On his death in 1201 his title to leadership passed to his sons (Rhys and Owain), who, in consequence, are found in opposition to Maelgwn for many years.

We must now leave this unhappy house of Deheubarth still embroiled in the squabble for power. Gwenwynwyn, too, is no longer a force worthy of detailed consideration. It is not until we come to speak of Llywelyn the Great that we can treat of a man and a movement that once again welded Wales into a nation and gave to its people once more their beloved liberty.

# CHAPTER XVII

## GEOFFREY, WALTER, & GERALD

IN this chapter we shall consider three men eminent in the realms of literature who, while being purely or partly of Welsh birth, made their influence felt throughout Europe, and who, brought up as they were in Wales, have left us a fairly complete picture of that country in the twelfth century. We shall thus not merely have to consider the men, but also the matter of which they wrote, and in so considering shall have something to say of the life and manners of mediaeval Wales.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, Walter Map, and Giraldus Cambrensis were all very remarkable men. Extremely learned for their age, they add a sprightliness and, especially in the case of the last two, a wit and wide knowledge of men which have made their writings live on right to the present day. The busy man to-day can pick up his Giraldus and laugh with him over the curious events recorded in the *Itinerary*, he can follow Geoffrey with pleasure through his pseudo-history of the Britons, he can enjoy Map, whether he be telling us of legends connected with the name of Arthur or of the prophecies of Merlin or his Goliardic stories or his opinions of the Cistercians. They were, indeed, singularly similar types. Though clerics and learned men, they never permitted their learning to make them dull. They had a ready ear for a story or a legend, and a quick wit. They were voluminous writers, and there is hardly a line they wrote that is not well worth reading.

### Geoffrey of Monmouth

This son of Arthur, private priest to William, Earl of Gloucester, was the earliest of the triumvirate. Born about

1100, he was brought up in the Welsh manner as the foster-son of Uchtryd, his paternal uncle, then Archdeacon, and afterward Bishop, of Llandaff. Educated at Oxford, he early became a friend of Walter of Wallingford, Archdeacon of Oxford, who suggested to him the compilation of a history of the Britons. According to Geoffrey, this Walter had already become possessed of a "very ancient British book," [1] which he had brought over from Brittany, and it was this book which Geoffrey drew upon for material for his *Historia Regum Britanniae*. While yet engaged in the production of his history he found time to make a Latin translation of the prophecies of Merlin from the Welsh—a work which was afterward incorporated into his history. The great work was eventually completed not later than 1139, for in that year it was read by Henry of Huntingdon in the Abbey of Bec in Normandy, and it has been stated by a competent authority that it was finished by 1135. The *Historia* is an account of the British nation from the fall of Troy onward. Geoffrey seems never to have permitted his imagination to receive the slightest check, and from beginning to end, as a history, it is completely untrustworthy. Even in his own century it was perceived by the discerning that it was far from being a truthful story. William of Newbury was particularly scathing, for among other rude things we find him saying: "In that book of his which he calls his British History how childishly and impudently he lies throughout no one, unless ignorant of the ancient histories, is left in any doubt." Giraldus summed up its value in his own manner by a story concerned with evil spirits. It appears that, according to him, a certain man had the power of seeing evil spirits. These spirits loved lies and hated truth; consequently, by observing from what books they fled he was able to judge the truth of the written word. "Once," we are told, "when he was much tormented by the evil spirits, he placed the Gospel of St. John in his bosom, when they immediately vanished from his sight like

[1] Thomas Wright suggested that it could not have been more than two hundred years old at the time.

birds; afterward he laid the Gospel aside, and for the sake of experiment took the *History of the Britons*, by Galfridus Arthurus, in its place, when they returned and covered not only his body, but the book in his bosom, far more quickly and more troublesome than usual." Giraldus' judgment was right, even as his mode of expressing it was witty.

But notwithstanding its complete untrustworthiness, Geoffrey's work instantly gained a wide popularity. The writer had succeeded in casting a glamour of romance over the early history of his country, and out of the storehouse of his imagination had created kings and courts, heroes and victories. It rapidly spread to the Continent. Copy after copy was made,[1] and in time its contents were accepted as true by historians of repute. Geoffrey's statements are followed by Holinshed, and through him by Shakespeare, who got his account of King Lear from this authority.[2]

In England many translations, adaptations, and modifications of the historio-romance early appeared, those known as the *Brut Tysilio*, the *Brut y Brenhinoedd*, and the *Brut Gruffydd ab Arthur* being the most famous. Of its effect on mediaeval romantic literature through its creation, or at least development, of the character of Arthur we have already spoken in a previous chapter. It is perhaps because of the eager seizure upon his materials by the poets and troubadours that Geoffrey gained his place as the leader in a wonderful literary movement, but the work itself, had it not been called a history, would have ranked high as a product of the imagination.

Apart from his writings, Geoffrey cut a respectable but not an imposing figure upon the stage of history. He was deemed learned by his contemporaries, and with the aid of his uncle was successful in obtaining preferment. According to H. R. Tedder, he was consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph in 1152, and

[1] An interesting copy dedicated to King Stephen instead of to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, appeared in the catalogue of Berne Library, Switzerland, in 1770. For an account of this see *Archæological Journal*, vol. xv, p. 299.

[2] His work was largely used by other Elizabethan dramatists. Such plays as *The True Trojans*, by Fisher, and *The Mayor of Quinborough*, by Middleton, are mainly based on Geoffrey's *History*.

PLATE XLII. GEOFFREY'S WINDOW, MONMOUTH 292

*Photo Frith*

this statement is generally accepted, though Robert Williams had previously pointed out that the Geoffrey thus appointed was another Geoffrey or Godfrey ap Arthur, who was made Abbot of Abingdon in 1165, which office he held *in commendam* with his bishopric until July 11, 1175, whereas 'Golfrai ab Arthur,' the real Geoffrey of Monmouth, died in 1152.[1] It is admitted on all sides that Geoffrey died in 1154 or 1155, after he had been elected Bishop of Llandaff, but before he had entered upon his office. The *Brut* tells us that he died at Mass.

## Walter Map

The second of the three worthies was born about 1140. He describes himself in *De Nugis* as a " marcher of Wales," and refers to the Welsh as fellow-countrymen. His name is also Celtic in form. It is probable, however, that he was not of pure Welsh blood, and many of his references to Wales are so aloof that it would appear that a foreign training and long residence in England and in France had made him look upon the Welsh as strangers. He was probably born in Herefordshire, though a claim has been put forward by Dr. Henry Owen on behalf of Pembrokeshire.[2] His parents appear to have been persons of position, high in favour with Henry II. After the young Map had received an excellent education in Paris he returned to England in 1162, and became attached to the king's court, holding a position as clerk of the king's household.

He seems early to have been regarded as a man of wit and discretion, and was sent on several diplomatic missions, later (*c.* 1173) being made a justice itinerant. Even at this time he was a bitter opponent of the Cistercians, and when he took the oath to administer justice to all men he was careful expressly to except Jews and Cistercian monks![3] Later in life he obtained considerable ecclesiastical preferment, holding the offices of Vicar of Westbury, Precentor of Lincoln, and

[1] This should be 1155. The *Brut* gives the date as 1154, and is a year behind.
[2] Gloucestershire has also been mentioned as his native county.
[3] This is related by Giraldus, who never tested a story very carefully with the touchstone of truth.

Canon of St. Paul's (1176). In 1197 he was made Archdeacon of Oxford, and in 1199 and 1203 was an unsuccessful candidate for the sees of Hereford and St. David's respectively. He died some time before 1210.

Throughout his life he seems to have taken an interest in Welsh folk-lore and in the manners and customs of the Welsh people. He it is who, in conjunction with Geoffrey of Monmouth, was responsible in no small degree for the development of the Arthurian legend. Indeed, according to Professor Saintsbury, Map is responsible even to a greater degree than Chrétien de Troyes for the perfecting of the Arthur stories. In his *De Nugis* he devotes much space to an account of Welsh characteristics. In his Second Distinction he impresses upon the reader the generosity and hospitality of these people, illustrating his statement by a story of a Welshman who killed his wife because she had driven a stranger from the shelter of their house into a blinding snowstorm by suggesting that his presence was unwanted. He, like Giraldus, speaks of the ' perfidy ' of the Welsh and of their readiness to break the most solemn oath. He, like Giraldus, treats of this people as a hardy and passionate race, trained up from childhood for war and ever ready to repay an insult with an arrow. The following story which he tells in *De Nugis* expresses neatly his view of the Welsh temperament. Map had already stated that the Welsh were "prodigal of life, covetous of liberty, careless of peace, warlike and cunning in arms, quick to revenge, very generous of everything, each most sparing of food for himself but bountiful of meat to another, so that each one's food is anybody's." He continues: "To show how full of rash and fatuous fury are the fits of the Welsh, a youth of a town called Hay went out to cross the river Coye: he was carrying a bow with two arrows, and happening to meet two of his enemies he took to flight. As he fled one of them followed so close that he seemed like to catch him. But the youth shot him with one of his arrows in the middle of his breast. The stricken man said to his comrade: ' Follow him, for I am dying, and bring me back my

life from him.' The other then pursued the youth toward the next town as far as he could, and then returned to his comrade. But as he made his way back, he in his turn was followed at a distance by the youth, who wanted to know the end of his fellow. The youth then saw that when the man who was unhurt came to his wounded comrade, lying in a thicket, the latter asked him whether he had brought him back his life from the youth. When he replied that he had not, ' Come here,' said the wounded man, ' to take from me a kiss for my wife and children, for I am on the point of death.' While the unwounded man was in the act of kissing his sick comrade, the latter, as he lay beneath him, stabbed him to the heart with a knife, saying, ' Lose thy life, thou who through thy cowardice hast failed to bring back mine ! ' But the man who was on top cut him, in the same way, with a knife to the heart, saying, ' No boast shalt thou make of my death, and my only misfortune is that the wounds thou hast given me compel me to die before I have passed on such kisses to thy wife and children ! ' "

Map's precise place in literary history is a somewhat difficult one to fix. Besides his *De Nugis* he is, of course, famous for his work on the Arthurian legend. He is also accredited with a large share of what is known as the Goliardic literature. It is scarcely believable, however, that the man who could even be tentatively accredited with *The Quest of Lancelot* should have penned the doubtful ditties common to the Goliards.

According to Thomas Wright, " The Goliardi, in the original sense of the word, appear to have been in the clerical order somewhat the same class as the jongleurs and minstrels among the laity, riotous and unthrifty scholars who attended on the tables of the richer ecclesiastics, and gained their living and clothing by practising the profession of buffoons and jesters." The term is a comparatively ancient one, and was certainly current as early as 923. The nature of their lays may be judged from Chaucer's lines :

> He was a jangler, and a goliardeis,
> And that was most of sinne and harlotries.

Map certainly obtained the reputation in the latter Middle Ages of being the author of *Golias* and other Goliardic verses, *e.g.* the well-known students' song which commences :

*Meum est propositum in taberna mori.*[1]

Some have even given him the credit of being a Rabelais who attacked the monks under cover of a licentious pen. With the reputation of a Goliard came that of being a bibulous cleric, or, as Thomas Wright elegantly phrases it, "a jovial toper."[2] According to his friend Giraldus, Map was a friend of Henry II, because the king admired him for his learning and courtliness; he was an acknowledged wit, a *littérateur*, and his taste in letters was excellent. As to the authorship of *Golias*, that work was undoubtedly produced in Map's lifetime; but though it was well known to Giraldus—who tells us that he was much shocked at its levity and licentiousness—he evidently had no notion that Map was the author, and it is highly probable that many of these rhymes are the productions of other pens, though it is also probable that Map was responsible for such verses as *The Cambriae Epitome*, which was a *précis* in rhyme of Giraldus' work.

### Giraldus Cambrensis[3]

Giraldus de Barri, called by his enemies Sylvester, or 'the Savage,' came of a right noble race. His father, William de Barri, was a prominent Norman noble in favour with the English court. His mother, Angharad, was a daughter of that Nest, wife to Gerald of Windsor, who, as we have seen, was abducted by Owain, and whose beauty and amours earned for her the title of 'the Helen of Wales.'

Born about 1147 at Manorbier, he was the eye-witness of many a sudden raid and fierce attack by the Welsh on the Normans and Flemings. As a boy he was much like other

[1] "I desire to expire in a tavern drinking."

[2] Wright repudiates the suggestion that Map was bibulous.

[3] We have made much use in what follows of Dr. Henry Owen's excellent biography *Gerald the Welshman*; also the Introduction to Giraldus' works in the Rolls Series.

boys, and preferred to practise archery rather than learn Latin. He seems, however, early to have shown considerable capacity and desire for learning, and we have preserved to us a number of Latin poems composed by him while yet a youth which, though not marvellous, are, on the other hand, by no means contemptible. Much of the polish which he later exhibited in his writings was doubtless due to his studies at Paris, where, according to his own statement, he was always pointed to as the really model scholar.

It was in 1172 that he returned from Paris to England, and immediately began to occupy a respectable position in the affairs of the Church. His uncle was Bishop of St. David's, and with his aid the brilliant young scholar soon obtained preferment. He successively held the livings of Llanwnda, Tenby, and Angle in Pembrokeshire, and Chesterton in Oxfordshire. He was also made Prebendary of Hereford and Canon of St. David's.

In 1175 he became Archdeacon of Brecknock, in place of Archdeacon Jordan, who had married a wife and, in his old age, refused to repudiate her. As Dr. Owen puts it, "He kept his wife, but he lost his archdeaconry."

Gerald was, indeed, at this time a stern reformer. Having cleansed Jordan's stables, he turned his attention to tithes. His energy brought him into contact with William Karquit, a Fleming, and sheriff of Pembrokeshire. Karquit, despising the young cleric, insulted Gerald by seizing eight yoke of oxen from Pembroke Priory. Gerald replied with bell, book, and candle. In Brewer's descriptive words, "The doleful clanging of bells announced to all the surrounding country that William Karquit, High Sheriff of Pembroke, was deleted from the muster-roll of the saints. Henceforth, whatever he might be in the transitory honours of the world, he was but a dead dog in the estimation of the faithful." Karquit submitted.

Gerald's next fight of importance was over the new church of St. Michael at Kerry. This church was claimed both by St. Asaph and St. David's, and while the Bishop of St. Asaph was engaged in consecrating it Gerald's party arrived, with

the irrepressible one at their head, intent on claiming it for St. David's. History has few more amusing pictures than the scene which followed. After a furious dispute Gerald brought out the bell, book, and candle, excommunicated the bishop, drove off the St. Asaph party by such a hideous clanging of bells that the sensitive Welsh ears could not tolerate it, and finally, deeming honour satisfied, sent his very good friend the bishop some "very excellent drink." The bishop was received back into the fold.

It was in the next year (1176) that the first step in Gerald's famous fight for St. David's was taken. Henry doubtless admired Gerald, but he also desired to have some control of the affairs of South Wales. The Lord Rhys was, as we have seen, already well-nigh independent of the king, and was the admitted head of the civil life of the south. Had such an independent spirit as Gerald been placed at the head of the ecclesiastical life of South Wales, English influence would have been eliminated. Consequently, when Gerald was chosen in that year Bishop of St. David's Henry avoided the election and commanded that Peter de Leia be chosen instead. It was as the king wished, and Gerald retired for the next four years to Paris, where he studied theology and Canon law.

On his return he was at once employed by Henry upon administrative work in Wales, with such successful results that he was rewarded by being made chaplain to the king in 1184. In the year following he accompanied Prince John to Ireland, where he acquired his material for the *Topography and Conquest of Ireland*. Shortly after his return he accompanied his old friend Archbishop Baldwin on the tour through Wales, mainly undertaken for the purpose of raising recruits for the Crusades. Gerald seems to have met with much success in his efforts to get men to be marked with the cross. As he, in his usual complacent manner, informs us, after Archbishop Baldwin had completely failed to move his audience he, Gerald, quickly moved them to tears, and it was only because he did not speak in Welsh that there were any men left unmarked with

PLATE XLIII. RUINS OF THE BISHOP'S PALACE, ST. DAVID'S

*Photo Frith*

the sign of the crusader. One great result of this tour was his *Itinerary* and his *Description of Wales.*

On the death of Henry, Gerald remained in high favour with both Richard and John. He declined the bishoprics of Bangor and Llandaff, choosing to wait until St. David's was once more free for his acceptance. In 1194, tiring, apparently, of the ordinary delights and duties of the court, he retired to Lincoln to study, and joined the theological school of William de Monte.

It was in 1198 that the see of St. David's became vacant once again. The chapter nominated Gerald, among others, and a deputation was sent to consult the king and obtain his consent. Richard was then in Normandy, but before the deputation arrived he was dead. John, however, accepted Gerald's nomination. In his usual faithless manner, as soon as he found that the appointment was inconvenient he refused to acknowledge and ratify publicly the consent thus informally given. Gerald was, however, elected by the chapter of St. David's, an election which was treated as void by Canterbury.

Hence commenced the famous fight for the independence of St. David's. Three times Gerald braved all the hardships and bore the expense of a journey to Rome. He used every weapon in his armoury. He amused the Pope with his wit, delighted him with his learning, won his admiration by his steadfast resolution to fight on against odds however great. He suffered outlawry, and replied by publicly excommunicating all his enemies. At his third visit to Rome (in 1203) he obtained considerable aid from the Pope. The elections which the chapter had made were annulled, and they were commanded to commence *de novo.* The archbishop was also ordered to pay Gerald's costs. Gerald left Rome, however, financially ruined, and would have been imprisoned by his creditors (who had followed him to Bologna) had not one of them declared that he had been warned by a vision not to molest the holy man.

Even now Gerald would not submit. The new election was held and appeared adverse to him. He arrived in time to

denounce his enemies and upset the nomination. So the struggle continued, until at last Gerald, deserted by all, permitted—for it can hardly be otherwise expressed—the election of the Prior of Llanthony.

The struggle for St. David's had lasted for five years. To it Gerald devoted the best of his energies, and, once ended, Gerald's public life ended also. For the twenty years which elapsed between the election of Prior Geoffrey and Gerald's death he lived the life of a studious and holy man. Having made his peace with his king and the archbishop, he repaired once more to Rome, this time for the benefit of his soul. So many were his pious exertions that he obtained, as Dr. Owen puts it, "indulgence for ninety-two years, which would seem to have left him with a balance in hand." [1] Gerald himself was convinced that he narrowly escaped being made a cardinal. Only once again did his eyes turn to St. David's. On the death of Prior Geoffrey, then Bishop of St. David's, Gerald had hoped that his claims would at last be recognized, but an ungrateful chapter chose instead Iorwerth, Abbot of Talley Abbey.

Gerald's last days were spent peacefully in Wales, perhaps at Manorbier. His death took place in 1223. He was buried at St. David's, and no more fitting spot could be found as a resting-place for his earthly remains. Throughout a life in which he had experienced many of the good things of the world—position, reputation, interesting and highly placed friends (for he was intimately acquainted with all the great men of his time, including Stephen Langton and Ranulph de Glanvill)—he had fought one great fight and met with one great disappointment, and both were connected with St. David's.

As a man Gerald is a perfectly enchanting person. His conceit is so naïve and so harmlessly expressed that it attracts rather than repels. He can tell us of his beauty, his learning, his eloquence, his generosity, without disgusting us. When speaking of his books he shows unbounded confidence in their immortality. He gave Innocent III six volumes of his writings

[1] Which, we may add, he seems to have placed on deposit.

when he particularly wanted to conciliate him, and could think of no better gift for Archbishop Baldwin than a copy of his own work, the *Topography of Ireland*. The first preface to the *Itinerary* shows the same complacency. After asking, "But among so many species of men, where are to be found divine poets? Where the noble assertors of morals? Where the masters of the Latin tongue? Who in the present times displays lettered eloquence, either in history or poetry?" he makes it tolerably clear that Manorbier had, in his opinion, produced one such, for, addressing his dedicatee, Stephen Langton, he says: "To you, therefore, rare, noble, and illustrious man, on whom nature and art have showered down whatever becomes your supereminent situation, I dedicate my works; but if I fail in this mode of conciliating your favour, and if your prayers and avocations should not allow you sufficient time to read them, I shall consider the honour of letters as vanished, and in hope of its revival I shall inscribe my writings to posterity."

Of his descriptions of the Welsh of his time we have made mention in many parts of this book. It is sufficient here to state that he admired that people much more than the "Saxon serfs," whom he treated as being completely under Norman domination. Wales itself he paints as a beautiful wild country of noble rivers, of mountains, moors, and marshes. Anglesey he regarded as the most fertile part of the land, the mountains of Eryri as yielding the best pasturage, Meirionydd as being the rudest and most barren district.

The people are treated as essentially fighters. Their whole life seems to have been a preparation for, or a devotion to, war. He tells us how a Welshman would deem it a disgrace to die in bed, and how even boys and youths constantly practised such exercises and arts as would fit them for battle. Indeed, war seemed to be more important than its cause. Sometimes the enemy was the Norman, sometimes another Welsh tribe. Sometimes its purpose was to resist aggression, frequently its aim was plunder. Indeed, Gerald regarded the

Welsh, much as he admired them, as great raiders, and as men whose oath did not bind them.

As to their social arrangements, it is clear that in the twelfth century the Welsh were an uncultivated people. They dined in the rudest manner off large trenchers placed on rushes on the floor. No table or cloth or napkin was used, and the diners ate in messes of three—this number being chosen, according to Gerald, in honour of the Trinity. The mess system of dining was, of course, common also in England at that period, where, however, the usual mess number was two, or, in the case of important families or functions, four (this practice still lives on among barristers, who to-day when dining together form messes of four).

We are told by our author that in Wales no one ever begged, "for the houses of all are common to all." The people were, indeed, exceedingly hospitable, and when guests were present the host and hostess declined all food until the others were satisfied. Frequently they must have denied themselves altogether to feed their friends, for Gerald, though he regards the Welsh as a frugal and temperate people, tells us that *when dining at another's table* after being hungry for days they developed a wolf-like hunger and both ate and drank to excess.

Of their nature Gerald paints a picture from which the modern Welshman could in many cases be recognized. Quick in repartee, witty in conversation, they were subtle and ingenious speakers, bold in speech and fearless of those whom others would deem their superiors. They were beautiful singers, delighting in part-songs, which had "as many different parts as voices." They were religious and superstitious, passionate in nature, vindictive but not jealous. Always proud of their birth, Gerald tells us that "even the common people retain their genealogy, and can not only readily recount the names of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, but even refer back to the sixth or seventh generation, or beyond them." Their worst fault would seem to have been inconstancy. Altogether a sufficiently pleasing and truthful picture.

PLATE XLIV. LLANBADARN FAWR 302

*Photo Culliford, Aberystwyth*

# CHAPTER XVIII

## LLYWELYN THE GREAT

THE thirteenth was a tragic century for Wales. It saw the rise of one Llywelyn to the position of a virtually independent prince. It saw the fall of another Llywelyn to the position of a humble tenant of the king of England. It saw the break-up of Welsh independence and the merging of the Welsh legal and judicial system into that of England. It is extremely difficult at this period of time to say to what causes the fall should be attributed. In a sense Llywelyn the Great was responsible for the loss of Welsh independence, although during his lifetime the light of his power was never eclipsed. The truth is that the weakness of John, the years of conflict between king, Pope, and barons, enabled Wales well-nigh to free herself from Saxon bonds. This was the work of Llywelyn the Great—a work continued with success during the early, ineffective years of Henry III.

A very wise and clear-sighted man would have hesitated a long while before basing any extensive or definite plan of campaign or aggrandizement upon the temporary troubles of the English royal house or the momentary disruption of the English polity. Not so Llywelyn. He played his life as though Johns were always going to rule in England—unless, indeed, they handed over the crown to infants of weak mind like Henry III. In other words, he appears to have left out of account the possibility of an Edward I. Exactly the same sort of folly was indulged in by Henry V. He attempted to conquer France by taking full advantage of a temporary weakness. The weakness passed, and with it the conquest. The same with Wales. But with Wales the conquest Llywelyn

aimed at was the rulership of the whole of Wales by the house of Gwynedd. He accomplished it, but by his very success he placed his house and his country in a false position. Gwynedd and her princes had little claim on the men of Powys and Deheubarth. Even had Wales been truly united under one man it was not strong enough, either in the number of its people or the wealth of its resources, to fight openly against England—now become a power of some importance in the world. The position of complete independence once taken up, however, had to be defended. It fell to Llywelyn the Second to defend it. He refused to do homage to Edward I for his lands or any of them. He claimed to be Prince of Wales. Such a claim could not be passed by in silence, and had Llywelyn been well advised he would have seen that such a claim could not be supported by force. The result was the loss of Welsh independence; the castling of the country from end to end; the merging of Wales into England. But it is a loss which must not be too readily laid at the door of the second Llywelyn. It was the false position taken up by Llywelyn the Great during years of weakness on the part of England which resulted in the fall.

### Llywelyn's Rise to Power

The opening years of the thirteenth century were mainly occupied, as we have seen, by the struggle between Maelgwn and Gruffydd, the sons of the Lord Rhys, for the lordship of Deheubarth. Gruffydd was, perhaps, the rightful successor, but in a country which recognized gavelkind as the usual mode of succession it would almost seem as though each son had an equal right. It is clear that the Lord Rhys had marked Gruffydd out for succession, and he appears to have been regarded as the rightful heir. Maelgwn, however, was not content to allow his brother to rule in peace, as we have seen. The result was a temporary weakness of the house of Deheubarth, and enmity between one branch of that house and Gwenwynwyn of Powys, who had espoused Maelgwn's cause.

In the meantime Llywelyn was steadily advancing his

power in the north. In 1201 he subdued the cantref of Lleyn. In 1202 he was openly opposing Gwenwynwyn, for, as the chronicler says, "though Gwenwynwyn was near to him as to kindred, he was a foe to him as to deeds." Two years before the death of Llywelyn's cousin Gruffydd ap Conan had probably resulted in an accession of territory to Llywelyn—had, indeed, made him master of almost the whole of Gwynedd. Lleyn, as we have seen, was added in 1201, and in 1202 he was acknowledged overlord by Howel ap Gruffydd, who held the lordship of Meirionydd.

Llywelyn was thus strong enough by 1202 to feel entitled to call upon the other princes and chieftains of North Wales to aid him in his struggle with Gwenwynwyn. Elise ap Madog alone refused and attempted the thankless task of peacemaker. For his good offices he was rewarded by the loss of his territory, which Llywelyn seized, and the grant of the castle of Crogen as a gift made "in charity." After thus seizing Penllyn and Bala Castles from the hapless Elise peace seems to have been made with Gwenwynwyn, who was thus left free to aid Maelgwn in his struggle for Llanymddyvri and Dinevor[1] Castles and the rulership of the south.

### John and Llywelyn

We must now pass in review the relationship which existed between the courts of John and Llywelyn. On John's accession in 1199 he seems to have looked with favour upon Llywelyn. Shortly afterward a change takes place and we find Gwenwynwyn rather than Llywelyn accepted as the friend of England. By 1201, however, Llywelyn is again regarded as the prince with whom it is most desirable to make terms, and in that year a formal treaty of peace was concluded between king and prince. Llywelyn was recognized as the rightful possessor of the lands he had won, subject to the recognition of John's overlordship and of "any fair legal proceedings which might be brought against him under English or Welsh law." Three years later Llywelyn contracted a

[1] Also spelt Dinevwr or Dinefwr, and Dynevor.

marriage with John's natural daughter Joan. The bond thus forged was to prove of material assistance to the Prince of Gwynedd in his later struggle with the English. With his wife he received from John the castle and manor of Ellesmere.

The years which follow are mainly noteworthy on account of the fall of the house of Breose. In the early part of John's reign William de Breose had been high in favour. He had been given power to conquer and hold what he could in Wales, and had received large grants of land and castles in South Wales. In 1207 the jealous, crafty, and utterly dishonourable John tore up all the grants, went back on all his promises, required William de Breose to surrender all his lands and handed them over to Faulkes de Breauté. William and his sons resisted. They were driven over to Ireland, and later brought back captive by John. Young William and his mother were put to death, as the chronicler significantly tells us, " unmercifully " in Windsor Castle.[1]

The fall of the mighty marcher house of Breose saw the rise of that of Herbert, which was now represented by Peter fitz Herbert, who received about this time a third part of the lordship of Brecknock. Gwenwynwyn seems to have deemed the moment opportune for the recovery of this district and promptly attacked the new lord. John, however, supported his favourite. Gwenwynwyn was seized at Shrewsbury and imprisoned. His liberty was subsequently obtained by the render of twenty hostages and the surrender of all his lands to the custody of the Crown. Llywelyn instantly took advantage of the fall of his rival, and, in the words of the chronicler, " took possession of all his territory, his castles, and his courts."

Llywelyn, now master of North and East Wales, began to turn his eyes toward the south, and prepared to attack Maelgwn, who was still a power in the south-west. Maelgwn, fearing that Llywelyn would obtain a permanent footing in his territories if he gained possession of the castles therein, voluntarily destroyed the castles of Ystrad Meurig and burned Dineirth and Aberystwyth. Llywelyn, however, by

[1] The form of death was starvation.

no means deterred, took Aberystwyth and repaired it, and occupied the whole of Cantref Penwedig, giving the other portion of Ceredigion above Aeron to his nephews, the sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys, and the opponents of Maelgwn.

It was in the year 1210 that John undertook his Irish campaign. Llywelyn seems to have taken advantage of the king's absence to ravage the territory of the Earl of Chester, who had lately built castles at Deganwy and Holywell. Throughout the preceding year (1209) Llywelyn appears, however, to have been on friendly terms with John. He probably attended the council at Woodstock in October 1209 and swore homage to his overlord. We also know that John and Llywelyn were exchanging letters and presents throughout 1209 and the early part of 1210. The writer of the *Brut* is therefore probably inaccurate in assigning the recovery of Powys by Gwenwynwyn with the aid of John to the year 1209. It more probably belongs to 1210.

It would now seem that John had reached the position he had been playing for for some years. Llywelyn had been lured on to regard himself as the king's friend. He had made an enemy of Gwenwynwyn in the east, of Maelgwn in the south, of the Earl of Chester in the north-east. John evidently considered that he had isolated Llywelyn sufficiently to break him easily. This was, of course, John's usual plan. It did not immediately succeed in the case of Wales, because John had forgotten, or overlooked, the Welsh love of liberty—a strange omission in one who had once been a marcher lord.

Whatever may be the cause or purpose, we find the English king turning from Llywelyn to Gwenwynwyn. The latter prince is again restored to power, and his old ally, Maelgwn, " out of joy thereat," as the chronicler puts it, " made peace with King John without regarding the oath and engagement that existed between him and Rhys and Owain his nephews, the sons of Gruffydd son of Rhys." Maelgwn signalized one peace by the declaration of war upon his nephews. They, however, raised an army and made a night attack upon Maelgwn's forces, and completely defeated them.

John now (1211) determined to attack Llywelyn and to bring him to complete submission. He summoned to him at Caerleon, or Chester, Gwenwynwyn of Powys, Howel ap Gruffydd of Gwynedd, Madog ap Gruffydd Maelor, Maredudd ap Robert Cydevain, and Maelgwn and Rhys Gryc, the last two being chieftains of Deheubarth. Llywelyn seems to have realized that the forces against him were too powerful to be met in battle, and relied upon the old policy of retreat. As the *Brut* puts it, Llywelyn " moved with his forces into the middle of the country, and his property to the mountains of Eryri; and the forces of Mona, with their property, in the same manner." John, meanwhile, had collected his forces at Deganwy. The expedition was a complete failure owing to John's neglect to pay attention to the commissariat department. The month being May, no crops were growing or ready for harvesting, no fruit could be plucked. As to cattle and all movable property, Llywelyn had doubtless ordered his followers to bring all their possessions with them. John's army was thus unable to get food from the Welsh, and apparently had made no arrangements to obtain it from England, so that, as the *Brut* says, " the army was in so great a want of provisions that an egg was sold for a penny-halfpenny; and it was a delicious feast to them to get horseflesh."

John, thus hampered by want of food, retreated, and was in England by, or about, Whitsuntide. Provisions were collected and steps taken to prevent a repetition of the fiasco of May. Returning with a larger army than before, he built many castles in Gwynedd, and rapidly crossed over the Conway river, pushing on quickly toward Eryri, where Llywelyn was still encamped. On the way he found an opportunity to destroy Bangor by fire as an answer to Bishop Robert's refusal to meet an excommunicated king.

It seems clear that Llywelyn realized that further resistance was useless. He therefore determined to make submission and took advantage of the fact that his wife was John's daughter to extract the most favourable terms possible. Joan was sent to the king to make peace " in any manner she

might be able." In answer to her embassy John ordered a safe-conduct to be given to Llywelyn, and eventually made peace with that prince on the terms that he should hand over, besides hostages,[1] some 20,000 cattle and forty steeds, and should transfer the midland district [2] to the king for ever. These were harsh terms, and reduced Llywelyn from prince of the major part of Wales to the position of a petty chieftain in the north. It is evident, however, that at this time John was too strong for him. The rest of the Welsh princes now submitted to the king, with the exception of Rhys and Owain, the sons of Gruffydd of Deheubarth, and they were compelled to surrender shortly afterward. As soon as they had made peace, however, we find their uncles Rhys Gryc and Maelgwn repenting of their bargain with the king and demolishing the royal castle of Aberystwyth, which Faulkes de Breauté had lately built.

By the summer of 1212 Llywelyn had decided to make an attempt to throw off the royal yoke. In the spring of that year he and his wife had spent Easter with John at Cambridge. It is significant that he returned to wage war upon his host. Doubtless signs were not wanting which showed to the discerning Llywelyn that the years when John's power was absolute were passing away. However that may be, we find him, on his return, confederating with Gwenwynwyn, Maelgwn, Madog, and Maredudd for the purpose of destroying the castles lately built in Gwynedd and of regaining the liberty which, in recent years, had been threatened, if not lost.

The new league was successful from the very beginning. John himself, engaged as he was in the north with William of Scotland, was unable personally to lead the forces of England against Wales, and the combination of almost all the Welsh princes was too strong for the marcher lords. All the castles in Gwynedd lately built by John were destroyed, except Deganwy and Rhuddlan. As regards Powys, Gwenwynwyn besieged Robert Vepont [3] in his new castle of Mathraval, and

[1] About thirty in number, including that Gruffudd, Llywelyn's son, whose subsequent life was so tragic.

[2] Probably including Rhos, Rhufoniog, Tegeingl, and Dyffryn Clwyd.

[3] Or Vieuxpont.

Rhys Gryc burnt Swansea. While Robert's castle was besieged, John hastened his army to the support of his lieutenant, and escorted Robert from Mathraval, which they burnt to the ground in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Welsh. Robert Vepont retired to Shrewsbury, where he revenged himself for the loss of his castle by hanging a mere baby, Rhys, the son of Maelgwn, who was a hostage to the king, and who was not yet seven years of age. Other hostages were also hung, the most important of whom were Howel ap Cadwalader, Madog ap Maelgwn, and Meurig Barach.

John now collected his forces at Chester for the purpose of finally crushing Llywelyn. On the other hand, the Welsh princes were immensely strengthened in their resistance by the moral support given to them by Pope Innocent III, who absolved Llywelyn, Gwenwynwyn, and Maelgwn from the oath of fidelity which they had given to John, and urged them to oppose the excommunicated king, at the same time lifting the interdict, which had previously been laid upon the whole of Wales as well as upon England, from the territories ruled by the three princes.

The result was a series of successes which enabled the allies to regain control of the midland district which had been taken from Llywelyn by the terms of the treaty of 1211. In the meantime John had thought better of his proposed expedition into Wales. Warnings from several sources, including Joan, Llywelyn's wife, had persuaded him that the barons meditated his murder in the fastnesses of Wales, and, realizing that he would be at the mercy of his enemies if those around him really desired his death, he cancelled all preparations and returned without having accomplished anything. An effort was then made by John to bribe two Welsh nobles to attempt the reconquest of the district recently won by Llywelyn. It came to nothing, however, and the Prince of Gwynedd remained master of the north, and shortly afterward still further strengthened his power by reducing the castles at Deganwy and Rhuddlan.

### Struggle for Llandovery Castle

Meantime Rhys and Owain, the sons of Gruffydd of Deheubarth, being practically disinherited by the successes of Maelgwn, who, as we have seen, was a member of the alliance against John, sent to the king for aid in recovering their patrimony. John replied by sending to the seneschal of Hereford and to Faulkes de Breauté, seneschal of Cardiff, orders to compel Rhys Gryc—Maelgwn's ally in all the struggles with young Rhys and Owain—to deliver up Castle Llanymddyvri. Rhys having refused to share a single acre with his nephews, they, together with Faulkes, invaded his territories and drove him to take refuge in the castle of Dinevor, which he strengthened. Young Rhys invested the castle, and, after an organized attack with siege engines and miners, succeeded in compelling Rhys Gryc to surrender it and give hostages. The elder Rhys now retired with his family to his brother Maelgwn at Castle Llanymddyvri, which they strengthened and prepared for a siege. Young Rhys, however, was again successful, the garrison capitulating on the terms that they should have safety of life and limb. Rhys Gryc thereupon attempted to flee from Wales, but was caught at Caermarthen and flung into the king's prison.

### The Campaign of 1215

We have now reached the fateful year 1215. Speaking of this year, the *Brut* tells us that "all the good men of England and all the princes of Wales combined together against the king, so that none of them without the others would enter into peace or agreement or truce with the king, until he restored to the churches their laws and privileges which he and his ancestors had aforetime taken from them, and until he had also restored to the good men of England and Wales their lands, and the castles, which he at his will had taken from them without either right or law."

John had endeavoured to prevent the Welsh princes from being brought into the powerful combination which was slowly

forming against him. Llywelyn had four hostages returned in 1214. Early in 1215 the king sent four men, including the Bishop of Lichfield, as ambassadors to see Llywelyn, Gwenwynwyn, Maelgwn, and Madog and ascertain their terms for support in the struggle which was now impending, and further overtures were made to Gwenwynwyn in April of the same year. It was in vain. Apart from the fact that John's promises were worthless, the Welsh princes shrewdly suspected that they could gain more for themselves than John had power to give them.

Llywelyn seems to have been the first to strike a blow against John. As soon as the northern barons (including one bishop, Giles de Breose) had entered London,[1] Llywelyn invested Shrewsbury, which was promptly surrendered without opposition, the castle being delivered up to him as well as the town. This was but the overture to a campaign which resulted in the destruction of many a castle in Wales, and in the driving out or subjection of the greater part of the English.

As we have seen, Giles de Breose was taking a prominent part in the insurrection. He early sent his brother Robert (or Reginald) to aid the Welsh princes, and later came himself to Wales to give them his support. Later, as we shall see, Llywelyn was the acknowledged head of a powerful army comprising all the princes of Wales, including Maelgwn, Rhys Gryc, and young Rhys and Owain, the two branches of the house of Deheubarth, who after so many years of enmity were now reconciled.

The de Breoses, after but a few days' fighting, obtained Pencelli and Abergavenny Castles, together with White Castle and the Isle of Cynwreid.[2] Later Aberhonddu, Maes Hyvaidd, Gelli, Blaenllyvni, and Buellt Castle [3] were all obtained without opposition. Soon afterward Reginald de Breose married Gwladus, the dark-haired daughter of Llywelyn, a mode of

[1] May 17, 1215.

[2] Or Ynys Gynwreid, or Skenfrith.

[3] These may be identified with Brecon, Hay, Radnor, Blaen Llyfni, and Builth.

strengthening the alliance between these two powerful houses which was followed by John de Breose in 1219, when he married Llywelyn's youngest daughter, Margaret. It may also be remembered that David, Llywelyn's second son and successor, married Isabella de Breose, so that the two families were very closely connected. Indeed, the de Breoses were rapidly becoming a Welsh family. Matilda de Breose had married a Gruffydd, the Lord Rhys' eldest son, and was the mother of the younger Rhys who had for so many years opposed his uncles Rhys Gryc and Maelgwn, while another Matilda de Breose married somewhat later Rhys Mechyll, the elder son of Rhys Gryc.

While these successes were being gained by the de Breoses, Walter ap Gruffydd or Gwallter ap Einion Clud took possession, with the consent of the other Welsh leaders, of Pain's Castle and Colwyn Castle and the cantref of Elvael. At the same time the Welsh completely overran Dyfed, except Cemaes, and that they ravaged, and Narberth and Maenclochog, which they burned. Young Rhys also, having raised a considerable army, obtained possession of Cydweli and Carnwyllon and burned the castle, from whence he went to Gower, reduced Castle Loughor (Llychwr), attacked the castle of Hugh (Castell Hen, possibly, at Talybont), which was defended, but subsequently burnt and the garrison put to the sword, and burnt the castles at Oystermouth (Ystrum Llwynarth) and Seinhenydd. (Seinhenydd has been identified by some with Swansea. It is probably unconnected with Senghenydd.)

By this time Magna Carta had been signed. So far as Wales is concerned it was only important at that time because of the inclusion of clauses 56–58, which provided for release of hostages, cession back of castles and territories seized by the king, and the return of documents signed and granted or deposited for the purpose of guaranteeing good behaviour. We hesitate to expand the treatment of even the Welsh clauses in Magna Carta, since, as every one knows, John early showed an intention to treat Magna Carta as a mere piece of paper, of no binding force and of no validity. The result of

this attitude was the calling in of Louis, Dauphin of France, by the English barons, and a renewal of the Welsh wars by the princes of Wales.

Llywelyn quickly collected around him well-nigh all the Welsh princes. The first place to be attacked was Caermarthen. Within five days that important and powerful stronghold was taken and razed to the ground. Next the victorious army demolished the castles of Llanstephen, St. Clear's, Laugharne, and Narberth. From thence Llywelyn proceeded to Ceredigion and attacked the castle of Emlyn, forced the men of Cemais to do homage to him, and destroyed the castle of their lord, now situated at Trevdraeth (Newport) in place of the older Nevern. Shortly afterward, about Christmas time, Llywelyn's arms were crowned with two great successes —the capture of Aberteifi (Cardigan) and Cilgerran Castles.

### Llywelyn Leader of the Welsh

The Welsh chieftains were now in a position to deal as they would with the lands of South Wales. At the same time Llywelyn was their acknowledged head and had powerful family influence through the de Breoses upon the fortunes of South Wales. It is therefore not surprising that we find him, in 1216, summoning the Welsh chieftains to Aberdovey to discuss the partition of land between the various claimants of the house of the Lord Rhys.

This council, to which were summoned "all the Welsh princes for the most part and all the wise men of Gwynedd," was similar in nature to those meetings which from the time of the Council of St. Albans continued to be held in ever-increasing frequency in England and in later times obtained the name of Parliament. The division of South Wales which was then made was surprisingly favourable to Maelgwn and Rhys Gryc. The sons of Gruffydd ap Rhys, who had for years been successfully resisting the encroachments of their uncles and Gwenwynwyn, had to be content with part of Ceredigion and Cardigan Castle. The rest went to their rivals in the race for power in Deheubarth. Maelgwn received a large

PLATE XLV. CILGERRAN CASTLE

*Photo Valentine & Sons, Ltd.*

part of Dyfed, including Cemais and Emlyn and the castles of Caermarthen and Cilgerran and two commotes in Ystrad Tywi and two commotes in Ceredigion. Rhys Gryc obtained Cantref Mawr and part of Cantref Bychan and Cydweli and Carnwyllion Castles. Although this division appears to us to be none too fair to the sons of Gruffydd, it seems to have been accepted by them, and no attempt was made for many years to alter the partition thus made.

In the same year Gwenwynwyn seems to have decided that Llywelyn's power was inimical to his own greatness. He therefore made peace with John and broke away from his allies of the preceding year, " treating with contempt," as the *Brut* puts it, " the oath and the engagements which he had plighted to the chieftains of England and Wales and violating the homage which he had done to Llywelyn ap Iorwerth and surrendering the hostages which he had given thereon." Llywelyn, realizing that the defection of one of the leading chieftains of Wales was playing into John's hands and seriously weakening the national movement, made strenuous efforts to regain Gwenwynwyn's aid. We read that he " laboured by every thought and affection and deed to recall him back." But though bishops and abbots were sent to try to dissuade the Prince of Powys from pursuing the road he had taken, it was all in vain, and Llywelyn, seeing that he could not have his help as a friend, determined to destroy his power as an enemy. Calling about him most of the princes of Wales, he made a sudden attack upon Powys and compelled Gwenwynwyn to flee to Chester. Powys itself was abandoned to Llywelyn, who was not slow to make himself master of the whole principality. Gwenwynwyn had chosen an ill time in which to oppose Llywelyn. The northern prince was practically master of Wales, and the king of England, to whom the Prince of Powys turned, was so beset with his own troubles as to have but little time to devote to Welsh affairs and little power to give or bring against friend or foe. Whatever might have been the upshot had John regained his old ascendancy, Gwenwynwyn would not have profited much, for the year

which saw his defection from the national cause also saw his death. Thus passes from the page of history one who, born to be a patriot, died almost a traitor to his country. He possessed many of the good and evil qualities common to many Celts; energy and bravery in a high degree, mixed with an imperious and a passionate temper which could not brook submission to anyone.

It was in the October of this year that John died. Before his death he had made an ineffective raid upon the Welsh border and had burnt the towns of Gelli and Maes Hyvaidd and demolished the castles there, afterward sacking and destroying Oswestry. It was the last ill deed that England's worst king was destined to do to Wales; and it was not without its bright side, for when John, nearing the Welsh border, sent messengers to Reginald de Breose and the Welsh princes calling upon them to join with him and make peace, the men of Wales without exception stood firm, and John's messengers returned, having accomplished nothing.

With the passing of John, however, the personal feud which had alienated the house of de Breose from the king came to an end. The starving of Matilda de Breose and her son in Windsor Castle was a crime for which John had paid to the full. The young Henry did not inherit the legacy of hate which his father might have been expected to have handed down to him. The result was that with the coming of the new king Reginald de Breose reconsidered his position and went over from the Welsh side to the English. This new defection brought out against Reginald both the forces of his nephews Rhys and Owain, the sons of Gruffydd, who, as we have seen, had lately been given a portion of Ceredigion, and also Prince Llywelyn himself. A large part of Buellt was wasted, and Aberhonddu Castle itself attacked. At last, Reginald having been surrounded and brought to bay, he wisely surrendered to Llywelyn and received from him the castle of Swansea.[1] Llywelyn shortly afterward took advan-

[1] We take this to be the place mentioned in the *Brut* as Sein Henydd, although Senghenydd has been suggested.

tage of his presence in Gower to push on to the west and attack the Flemings. Haverford was surrounded and preparations for its reduction made, when peace was arranged, the terms being that the Flemings should give twenty hostages from Rhos and Pembroke and pay 1000 marks by next Michaelmas, or else they were to do homage to Llywelyn and hold their lands under him for ever.

About the same time Rhys Gryc seems to have indulged in an extensive raid upon Gower, and to have driven out many of the English who were dwelling there, filling their places with Welshmen.

In the meantime Llywelyn and the Welsh princes generally had completely lost the Pope's support, which had proved so valuable in the early days of the struggle with John. Llywelyn, indeed, had been excommunicated. Nevertheless he was still strong enough to resist the terms of peace originally offered by Henry III through the regent. At last, however, peace was made on terms which must have reached Llywelyn's highest hopes. The important royal castles of Caermarthen and Aberteifi (Cardigan) were given over to his charge until the king was of age, and the lands of Gwenwynwyn were also granted to him as custodian until Gwenwynwyn's infant son, Gruffydd, should attain his majority. Llywelyn, for his part, did homage to the king at Worcester in the presence of the magnates of the realm, and persuaded young Rhys and all the Welsh princes to go to Henry's court to do him homage.

Llywelyn now turned his attention once more to the Flemings of Rhos. In this campaign Llywelyn appears not to have acted alone, but as the leader of the Welsh princes generally. The expedition was made, according to the *Brut*, in consequence of the Flemings having committed frequent depredations upon the Welsh in spite of the treaty of peace lately entered into and the compact concluded at Worcester. However this may be, the campaign was both short and successful. The very first day Narberth Castle was rushed, and its garrison put to the sword or captured or consumed by the flames which destroyed the castle. On the next day Castle

Gwys and the surrounding town were both burnt; on the third day Haverford itself was laid waste by fire, even to the castle walls. Finally, as the chronicler puts it, "he [Llywelyn] went round Rhos and Deugleddyv in five days, making vast slaughter of the people of the country." At last a truce was made with the Flemings, and Llywelyn once more returned to his northern home.

### Llywelyn Supreme

It is now desirable to state shortly the position at this time between Llywelyn, the English Government, and the Welsh princes. The policy of Henry III's ministers, and in particular of William Marshal and the legate Guala, and in subsequent years of their successors, Hubert de Burgh and Pandulph, was to conciliate Llywelyn rather than to drive him to rebellion. It would seem that these statesmen had at last realized that the conquest of Wales, if possible, would necessitate a vast expenditure of lives and money, and would never be wholly successful. They seem, therefore, to have decided on having a contented, prosperous, and friendly neighbour rather than an enemy, ever dangerous, even when conquered. They would seem also to have had in mind the warnings of that shrewd Welsh-Norman Giraldus who had pointed out the difficulties underlying the conquest and control of Wales, and had said with excellent wisdom that what the Welsh nation needed to be happy and contented was one prince, and that a good one.

Here, then, was the opportunity to give Wales prosperity without completely relinquishing control on the part of England. Llywelyn was a prince and a good one. He had shown himself capable of rising by his own capacity and eminent qualities to a supreme position among the chieftains of Wales. He had also done homage to Henry III with all due formality at Worcester. He was, in a word, the most suitable person to place at the head of Welsh affairs, both from the point of view of Wales and of England. In consequence of this feeling and this attitude on the part of the English Government, we find Llywelyn for the next few years

PLATE XLVI. SEAL OF LLYWELYN THE GREAT 318

*The lower figure represents a small oval counter seal*

the favoured friend rather than the enemy of England. Grants of markets and manorial rights were made to him; his son David was recognized as his heir; and in 1222, as Professor Lloyd says, "he was still treated by the Crown as its best friend and supporter in all dealings with the princes of Wales."

The year 1221 is noteworthy for an event which marks a change from the old method of settling disputes by battle to a new and better way which at once saw justice done and preserved the peace. As we have seen, some years before Llywelyn had called a council at Aberdovey to decide how South Wales should be divided among the various claimants of the house of Rhys. As we suggested, young Rhys got none too much as his share, and although he accepted the division at the time, we find him in this present year angry because of the gift of Caermarthen by Llywelyn to Maelgwn and the prince's subsequent refusal to give Aberteifi to him. Llywelyn retorted by seizing Aberystwyth Castle. In the old days this would have been a signal for a general war, but now either Llywelyn was too powerful or the times were better, and young Rhys, instead of flying to arms, repaired to the court of his overlord, King Henry, and made formal complaint. The result was that Henry cited Llywelyn and the lords of the marches to Shrewsbury to have the matter placed before the king's council. In that council young Rhys was successful; he and Llywelyn were reconciled, Llywelyn relinquished Aberteifi, and the peace was kept.

While this dispute was proceeding the relations between Llywelyn and some of the most important marcher lords were admirable. In the north Earl Ranulf of Chester was his friend, and after 1220 his relative by marriage, and in the south the family of de Breose, united as it was with the house of Gwynedd by many ties, remained on cordial terms with him. In 1221, indeed, John de Breose, on the advice of Llywelyn, rebuilt two castles which had been destroyed in the late wars, and occupied them. As regards the Mortimers in the east, the feeling was not quite so friendly, but on the other hand that family was no longer the object of the malignant

hate which had been directed against it in the early years of the Norman occupation.

### Llywelyn and William Marshal the Younger

In one quarter, however, Llywelyn had a dangerous enemy. The old Earl Marshal was now succeeded in the lordship or honour of Pembroke by William Marshal the younger. Lacking his father's wisdom, he saw fit to look upon Prince Llywelyn with the eyes of a marcher lord rather than those of a great Englishman. Having taken that view, it was natural that he should attempt to reduce Llywelyn's power by war. Consequently, in 1223, on his return from Ireland, we find him seizing Cardigan and Caermarthen Castles and attempting the occupation of Cydweli. Llywelyn promptly countered the aggression by sending his son Gruffudd with a considerable army to oppose the Earl's progress. After an indecisive battle the English Crown stepped in to prevent further fighting and cited both Llywelyn and William to Ludlow. "And," as the chronicler says, "the prince and the earl appeared together at Ludlow [1] before the council of the king and the archbishop." With the memory of Llywelyn's depredations on the Flemings, the Earl Marshal probably had good cause to regard the prince as his particular enemy. However that may be, apparently no reconciliation was arrived at in this council. Llywelyn seems to have left the meeting-place an angry man. The English Government, for its part, appears to have decided in favour of the Earl Marshal, or rather against Llywelyn, for we find several indications that from that time Llywelyn was less in favour than for years past. He retaliated by attacking Builth Castle, then in the hands of the de Breose family. Hubert de Burgh now saw that a fresh outbreak between the Welsh and the marchers was impending, and would fall with grievous results unless promptly prevented. The royal troops were rapidly advanced to the Welsh borders, Builth Castle was relieved, and Montgomery occupied and subsequently converted into one of the strongest border fortresses.

[1] Professor Lloyd doubts whether the meeting ever took place.

Llywelyn now took the wise course of submitting to the Crown, and in consequence we find very fair peace terms arranged between the two states. Llywelyn's position had, indeed, become one of some danger. As Professor Lloyd says: "He had forfeited, of the gains of the civil war, Cardigan, Carmarthen, and Montgomery, and his south Welsh allies . . . ran the risk of losing everything in his cause." Bearing in mind this position, the terms offered were by no means onerous. Llywelyn was to relinquish the fruits of his Shropshire raid in the early part of the year. Montgomery, Cardigan, and Caermarthen remained in the hands of their holders as at the time of the peace, but on the other hand the princes of South Wales recovered all the losses they had sustained at the hands of the Earl Marshal. Llywelyn thus gained vicariously, and indeed directly, for he was enabled by this settlement to keep as friends and as allies the men of South Wales, who, had their provinces been taken from them, would have been potent only as enemies.

### Friendship and Enmity

The years which immediately follow are free from events of any importance. Presents which pass between the English court and Joan, Llywelyn's wife, on the one hand and the Welsh prince and the king on the other hand show that in 1225 cordial relationship still existed between the royal and princely houses. In 1226 Llywelyn, his wife, and his heir met the king at Shrewsbury, when a further manor was granted to Joan, and in April of the same year the Pope, Honorius III, granted to Joan—who, it will be remembered, was John's natural daughter—a declaration of legitimacy. The death of the head of the Mortimers and the absence of the Earl Marshal in Ireland further tended toward peace in the marches.

In the early part of 1228, however, a sudden change came over Welsh affairs. The Welsh seem to have regarded the transference of the castle of Montgomery from the Crown to the hands of Hubert de Burgh as a hostile act; the castle

was surrounded and an attempt made to reduce it. There are grounds for believing that the justiciar proposed to use Montgomery as a centre from whence to reduce the surrounding country to submission. Apart from this scheme, which was frustrated by the new Welsh movement, Montgomery was an important and valuable stronghold, and the English were by no means prepared to allow it to fall into the hands of the Welsh. At first Llywelyn attempted to patch up peace, but after a few friendly overtures the attempt failed and war was commenced. The *Brut* tells us that "King Henry, having with him the strength of England, came to Wales, intending to subjugate Llywelyn . . . and all the Welsh princes." The strength of the Welsh had been somewhat reduced in the year preceding by the outbreak of another family feud between the members of the house of Deheubarth, but with the coming of the English the Welsh princes sank their differences and rallied to the standard of Llywelyn, now the acknowledged prince and leader of the Welsh. As usual, the English found themselves unable to overcome the natural difficulties of the country. As in the campaigns of Henry II and John, the English forces were defeated rather by lack of food than by battle. The Welsh, however, won some advantages apart from the aid rendered by nature. William de Breose was captured, and considerable loss inflicted on the English by means of the usual guerrilla warfare. Terms of peace were arranged, and the English consented to destroy the castle which Hubert de Burgh had commenced to build in order to threaten Arwystli, Llywelyn on his part agreeing to pay a considerable sum for the privilege of being allowed to justify Hubert's prophecy when he called this castle, which was to be, but never was, 'Hubert's Folly.' On the other hand, Llywelyn had made a handsome profit out of William de Breose, who was only ransomed on the terms that he handed over Builth Castle, together with a large sum of money and some land—a ransom which availed the unhappy William but little, for he was hanged by Llywelyn before two years had passed for being caught "in the chamber of the prince, with

PLATE XLVII. MONTGOMERY CASTLE

*Photo Valentine & Sons, Ltd.*

the princess Joan, daughter of King John, and wife of the prince." [1]

For the time being peace was established. Llywelyn rendered homage and the amicable relations of the preceding years were resumed. It was Hubert de Burgh's unquenchable ambition that was mainly responsible for the outbreak of 1231. It was becoming ever more evident that the justiciar would not be content to be a mere marcher lord. That he had designs on the whole of South Wales is probable, that he was steadily increasing his power in the marches is certain. He had obtained control over the Welsh lands of the Earl of Gloucester, and later of John de Breose, and on the death of the Earl Marshal his power was pre-eminent among the marcher lords.

The outbreak of 1231 was, however, both sudden and unexpected. As before, Llywelyn abruptly determined on war, although but a few months before he had been on friendly terms with England. The campaign which followed was one long series of successes. Castle after castle fell to the victorious Welsh. South Wales was swept well-nigh from end to end. Perhaps the most important gain of all was the capture of Cardigan Castle—an exploit which had been simplified by young Maelgwn's achievement in burning the town of Cardigan even to the castle gate.

As a reply Llywelyn was, as usual, excommunicated. Relief was hurried to Newport Castle and one of the grants to Joan was revoked. It was, however, some months before Henry assembled his main army at Gloucester. Even then no

[1] The whole story is a sad one and we touch upon it lightly. That Joan, now a matron of many years and the mother of a numerous family, should have proved frail after standing by her husband through all their early trials as his best friend and most potent ally makes us hope that those annalists who regard the story of infidelity as a mere excuse for William's death are correct, even though it stamps Llywelyn with the mark of murderer. But in justice to that prince it is necessary to remember that political expediency was against William's death. David, Llywelyn's heir, was about to be married to William's daughter Margaret. And, further, Llywelyn's vengeance was not directed against William alone, for Joan also was imprisoned. William himself was hanged on a tree in broad daylight before nearly a thousand men who had assembled to witness the downfall of their prince's private enemy. The affair had but few political consequences and David actually married Margaret.

important steps seem to have been taken to attack the Welsh, the English forces apparently contenting themselves with castle-building. With the approach of winter the English withdrew. Before they returned to the attack overtures for peace had been made, and by the end of November 1231 a cessation of hostilities took place. The reason for this sudden relinquishment of all attempts to avenge the losses sustained by Hubert de Burgh is probably to be found in the fact that Hubert himself was declining in power. Peter des Roches was now back in England, aiming at the downfall of his rival, and neither Hubert nor the English Crown was completely free to give much attention to Welsh affairs.

By 1233 the storm which had been brewing in England broke, and while his eastern neighbour was in the throes of civil strife Llywelyn was not slow to take advantage of that fact in order to advance his own position. Henry was throughout the summer and autumn of that year engaged in conflict with the powerful Earl Richard of Pembroke, brother to that William Marshal of whom we have lately spoken. Llywelyn during these months stood aloof, but by the autumn appears to have decided, for no very obvious reasons, to throw in his lot with Richard, who was at least holding his own in the struggle. Llywelyn himself devoted his attention to Brycheiniog. The castle of Aberhonddu (Brecon) was laid siege to and missiles and engines brought to bear on it to force its surrender. At the end of a month's ineffective siege Llywelyn desisted, after reducing the town itself to ashes. Having relinquished the attack on Brecon Castle, the Welsh leader turned his attention to Colunwy town, which he burnt, subjugated the Teme valley, burned Trallwng (Welshpool), proceeded to Red Castle,[1] which he razed to the ground, and burned the town of Oswestry.

Soon afterward Richard and Llywelyn, aided by the Welsh chieftains of the south, overran South Wales. Many castles were taken, including Cardiff and Abergavenny, but Caermarthen Castle stood firm, and all efforts to capture it failed.

[1] This is doubtful. See Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. ii, p. 680 *n.*, and compare the *Brut y Tywysogion* under date 1233.

In the February of the next year Earl Richard left for Ireland to oppose the king's forces there. As we know, it was the last adventure this man, who, possessing many admirable qualities, was unfortunate enough to live in a time when the State was ruled by foreign favourites, was destined to embark upon. He fell in the April of that year to the dagger of a traitor. The effect of his death upon Welsh affairs was not important, for more than a month before his death a truce had been arranged between Llywelyn and the English. The downfall of Peter des Roches brought with it that of his nephew (or son) Peter de Rivaux, who was one of the causes of the Welsh discontent, and a treaty of peace was made whereby the *status quo ante bellum* was reverted to.

## Llywelyn's Last Years

It will now be evident to the reader, as it was to both the English and Welsh of that time, that Llywelyn was a man who could hold his own in any dispute, and who possessed the wisdom and statesmanship necessary to gather the fruits of his victories and to cover over the traces of his defeats. For more than a quarter of a century he had waged intermittent but successful war upon his enemies, and in the intervals of peace had been regarded as a prince to be respected and considered. In a word, Wales had got its "one prince, and that a good one," for whom Giraldus sighed. It now remained for the world to see whether the successful leader of armies knew how to govern.[1]

The year 1237 saw the death of Llywelyn's wife Joan, a princess who, apart from the unfortunate event of 1230, had nobly supported her husband in his struggle for power. Llywelyn, who had forgiven his erring consort after she had suffered a short imprisonment, honoured her memory by building "the monastery for bare-footed monks[2] called Llanvaes in Mona."

[1] It is to be understood that Llywelyn was not *de jure* Prince of Wales. He was Prince of Gwynedd and Môn and custodian of what had been Gwenwynwyn's possessions only, but *de facto* he controlled the whole of Wales.

[2] The Franciscans.

This princess was a very remarkable personality, and it is doubtful if full justice has been done to her memory. All the world has heard of Llywelyn the Great; for centuries the word 'Llywelyn' was almost synonymous with 'Welshman.' Joan, on the other hand, was soon well-nigh forgotten. Yet it is not too much to say that had there been no Joan there would have been no Llywelyn the Great. We may, indeed, hazard the suggestion that what Llywelyn was in the field Joan was in the council-chamber. Even after her lapse from fidelity Llywelyn appears to have quickly let her out of prison in order to complete the negotiations with Henry which were so suddenly, and of necessity, broken off by her incarceration. Throughout the years which elapsed between the time when the newly wed bride was sent over the mountains of Eryri to plead her husband's cause before her father John and this very significant enlargement, Joan ever stands out prominently as the mediator between Wales and England. Between her bargainings for her country she seems frequently to have devoted her talents to obtaining concessions for herself, so that constantly we find records of grants of manors and manorial rights being made to this brilliant daughter of a clever but unscrupulous king. Finally, as we have seen, she obtained either directly or indirectly a dispensation from the Pope removing the stain on her birth.

The death of the Princess of Aberffraw in a sense complicated the question of succession. While she was alive her eldest son, David, was unquestioned heir, and as such had been recognized some years before. On her death, however, Llywelyn's eldest son, Gruffudd,[1] not improbably looked forward to sharing the rights of succession with his younger half-brother. Gruffudd was, of course, according to English notions, an illegitimate child; but with the Welsh birth in wedlock counted no more than birth out of wedlock: each child was equally the child of his father, quite apart from the mother's legal status. Gruffudd, beside these natural

[1] With reference to the spellings 'Gruff*u*dd' and 'Gruff*y*dd' see Preface, p. xiii.

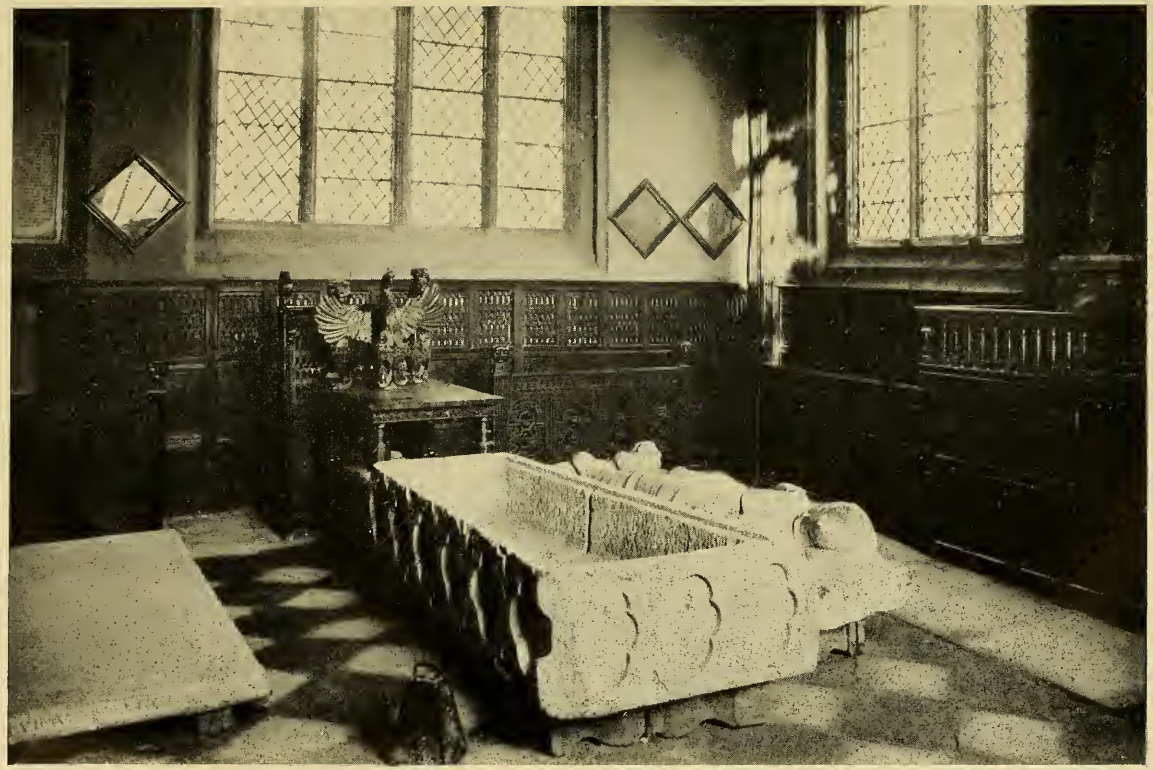


PLATE XLVIII. THE COFFIN OF LLYWELYN THE GREAT, LLANRWST CHURCH

*Photo Owen Evans, Conway*

claims, had an independent and fiery spirit, which advanced him in popular favour and strengthened his position considerably. Consequently, in the year following Joan's death we find Llywelyn calling all the princes of Wales to Strata Florida to swear fidelity to his son David, thus confirming the recognition of David's title made by the Welsh in 1226. At the same time all Gruffudd's lands were taken from him, save only Lleyn, and transferred to the younger brother. There were certainly excellent reasons for this policy. David alone had any chance of being recognized by either the English or the Pope.[1] He alone could expect favourable treatment from the English king, and that on account of his relationship to the English royal house. Moreover, it must have been evident to Llywelyn that Gruffudd, with his fiery Welsh temper, lacked that balance and cool-headedness which were necessary if any prince was to hold the strings of power which Llywelyn had so laboriously gathered together. Llywelyn also had to guard against a division of power after his death, a division which would have brought down the structure he had raised like a pack of cards, a division like those which in the past had proved well-nigh the ruin of Wales. It was therefore not merely a case of favouring one son at the expense of another; it was a question of choosing one sole heir to the whole of his dominion to the complete exclusion of the other. It was a case of deciding the succession of a crown rather than the inheritance of land.

Llywelyn himself was now an old man for those times. His last years saw him the sufferer from a paralytic seizure, but his mind remained clear, and when he died in 1240 he was still at the height of his power. The chronicler who writes in the *Brut* found it impossible to describe his hero's manifold virtues; he speaks of him as "a man whose good works it would be difficult to enumerate." The *Annales Cambriae* refers to him as a second Achilles. Poet after poet exhausts the vocabulary of rhetoric in describing his manifold virtues.

[1] It will be remembered that the English recognized him as heir in 1220; the Pope in 1222.

Perhaps the words of Dafydd Benfras [1] express the feelings of these bards as well as any, for he sings :

> Had I the skill of a wizard
> In the primitive, eloquent bardic strain,
> I could not for the life of me paint his prowess
> in battle,
> Nor could Taliesin.

Llywelyn was, indeed, the prince of Welsh princes. Not only was he great as a soldier, but also as a diplomat, not only as a statesman, but also as a benefactor of religion, as a patron of learning and of poetry, as a lawgiver and administrator. In his times Wales came near to becoming completely independent. He truly was Prince of Aberffraw and Lord of the mountains of Eryri. In his time the poets burst into song, literature flourished, and religion was respected. Thus was the wisdom of that saying of Giraldus proved : " Happy and fortunate indeed would this nation be, nay, completely blessed, if it had good prelates and pastors, and but one prince, and that prince a good one."

[1] We quote from Professor Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. ii, p. 691.

# CHAPTER XIX

## THE DOWNFALL

WITH the death of Llywelyn the Great the position in Wales was for a time substantially altered. Llywelyn, by the force of his personality, aided by the support of his wife and her relationship on the sinister side to the English Crown, together with circumstances peculiarly favourable for the existence and continuance of Welsh independence, had raised himself to a position higher than that occupied by any Welsh prince since the Normans had obtained a firm footing in the marcher districts. With his death the firm hand was removed. Shortly before his death, as we have seen, Joan, his wife, had also died. England, though still weak, was slowly recovering from the discontent induced by John's wretched defiance of law, of the nobles, the people, and the Pope. Times were changed, and even had a great man succeeded Llywelyn ap Iorwerth he would, indeed, have had a difficult task before him had he determined to assert the right to maintain the position his predecessor had attained.

David, whom, as we have seen, Llywelyn had chosen as his successor, and who had been accepted as such by the princes of Wales even in his father's lifetime, showed during his brief career many admirable qualities, which, had times been more favourable, might have enabled him to govern Wales with honour, if not with glory. But, as we have said, times were changed, and, moreover, he had the misfortune to have brothers.

The history of Wales shows us nothing so strongly or so frequently as the misfortune of joint claimants to a throne. Llywelyn had seen quite clearly that unless unusual steps were taken to secure to David the sole and undivided allegiance

of Wales the State would be split up, as had so frequently happened before, Wales would be weakened, its polity would become incoherent, and it would fall a simple prey to England.

Even before Llywelyn's death David and his brother Gruffudd had been at feud. The aged prince had, however, succeeded in keeping them apart; the princes of Wales had sworn fealty to David at Strata Florida, the support of the Church had been enlisted on his behalf. David, seconding his father's efforts, had imprisoned Gruffudd, and so when the time came to step into his father's place it appeared as though he had cause to fear no rivals.

Unfortunately for David, he was to learn that an imprisoned prince is almost as potent for mischief as a free one. Moreover, the other Welsh princes, and in particular Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, although prepared to acknowledge the pre-eminence of Llywelyn, and even, at his behest, swear fealty to his son, were by no means eager to follow the untried and comparatively youthful David. The result, as we shall see, was that David was placed in a difficult, it may even be said in an impossible, position.

At first the steps he took were prudent. He attended the council at Gloucester and did homage for Gwynedd. Notwithstanding this ready acknowledgment of Henry as his overlord, England was by no means prepared to allow him to occupy his father's position. That prince had, as we have seen, obtained power over the whole of Powys—although rather as custodian of lands forfeited to England than as conqueror; however, he had been too strong to make it desirable or possible to wrest them from him. Now it was otherwise. Gwenwynwyn's heir was clamouring for his lands; Gilbert, Earl of Pembroke, was already taking steps to recover Ceredigion; the lords of Montalt demanded the return of Mold; the Welsh in the south were also asserting themselves. David, almost isolated as he was and weakened by the rival claims of his brother, temporized, then proposed arbitration. The offer was accepted, and David, after further procrastination and delay, was cited to appear at Shrewsbury. He

defaulted, as he did on the second occasion, when the arbitration was fixed to take place at Montford.

The result of David's evasions of these attempts to have the matter settled amicably—evasions doubtless prompted by the knowledge that the result was a foregone conclusion—brought down the wrath of the king upon him.

It was in the autumn of 1241 that Henry assembled an army and, in the words of the chronicler, "came to subdue the princes of Wales." The campaign was completely successful. In less than a month the English, favoured by fine weather, had David at their feet. As the *Brut* tells us, the result was that Henry "took hostages from David, his nephew, on account of Gwynedd, that David should pay to Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn his whole claim to Powys, and to the sons of Maredudd ap Cynan their whole claim in Meirionydd. And he cited David to London before the council, and he was to bring with him his brother Gruffudd, and all the prisoners that were with him in the prison of the king, to London."

In the meanwhile Gilbert of Pembroke had taken the law into his own hands. Cardigan Castle had been restored and the foundations laid for the renewal of English authority in south-western Wales. The earl himself had been removed by a wound from the scene of action, but the result was merely to enable the king to take his place and obtain control of that part of Wales. In 1242 we find John of Monmouth occupying and strengthening Builth and Menevia, while Maelgwn the Little seized Garthgrugyn, and Roger Mortimer took possession of Maelienydd.

Thus in less than three years David had been reduced to the position of a tribal chieftain. Even in this position he was not secure. Henry, by obtaining the custody of his rival Gruffudd (whom he had placed in the Tower of London), had made a clever move. It was now possible for him to reduce David to the position of a chieftain battling for his chieftaincy by putting Gruffudd against him and by giving to the rival the royal support. Henry, however, was soon to lose this lever. In 1244 Gruffudd, weary of his long imprisonment,

made a daring attempt to escape. Fashioning a rope out of sheets and cloths, he endeavoured to climb down it from a window in the tower in which he was imprisoned. But the rope broke before he had got very far, and falling heavily from a considerable height, he broke his neck. David, on hearing of his brother's death, determined to avenge one whom in life he had hated.[1] As the *Chronicle of the Princes* tells us, "David became enraged, and summoned all his good men to him and attacked his foes, and drove them from all their borders"—the chronicler significantly adds, "except such as were in castles." David next sent to all the Welsh princes claiming their aid. There was a considerable response, though the Powysian princes and Morgan ap Howel hung back. These, we are informed, David attacked and compelled to make submission.

David now began to show the qualities of a leader of men. Not content merely with gathering the Welsh chieftains round him, he looked for help from higher quarters. The Pope's aid was sought, and for the moment was obtained. David, meanwhile, taking advantage of Henry's Scottish troubles, seems to have ravaged the border counties, and although at first Henry treated the movement as a matter of small moment, it soon became apparent that the king's presence was necessary in order that peace might be restored.

We have now reached the year 1245. The earlier months had been occupied in unimportant struggles between the English and Welsh—struggles which had favoured sometimes the one side, sometimes the other. At last, however, after the loss of Mold Henry determined to act, and, assembling the English forces and calling upon the Irish to lend support, he marched on Wales, intending its conquest. Deganwy was his objective. He was at Chester by August 13, and had reached Deganwy by the 26th. Here he remained until the end of October, busying himself with castle-building. Little further

[1] Professor Lloyd suggests, doubtless correctly, that David's renewed activity was due less to his belated brotherly regard than to the fact that, now his rival was removed, he was free to act.

was done, and, in the words of the *Brut*, "after fortifying the castle, and leaving knights in it, he returned to England, having left an immense number of his army dead and unburied, some having been slain and others drowned." In truth the expedition had been little more than a failure. Henry, it is true, had strengthened Deganwy, but he had lost many men, the Welsh having constantly harassed his forces and having skirmished and attacked by day and night with the utmost bravery. His army had also suffered severely from exposure. Food was almost unprocurable, and the weather was harsh. Matthew Paris has much to say of the hardships thus endured. The fear of raids, want of food and proper clothes and shelter made the English pray for a quick and safe retreat. Henry on his return revenged himself for his failure by forbidding all trade in corn, salt, iron, steel, or cloth with Wales.

### David's Death. Rise of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd

It was early in the year following that David died, leaving no heir to follow him. At once a dispute arose over the succession. The two chief claimants were Owain the Red and Llywelyn, the eldest and second son of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn Fawr respectively. These two brothers eventually decided, "by the advice of good men," to settle their differences and divide the inheritance.

The times were certainly not suited to disputes between the Gwyneddians themselves. The English were still threatening. Henry had sent Nicholas de Myles, or Meules, justice of Caermarthen, who had joined with Maredudd ap Rhys and Maredudd ap Owain to dispossess Maelgwn of Deheubarth. This chieftain had been compelled to fly to Gwynedd and to throw himself on the protection of Owain and Llywelyn. Nicholas followed them, leading his army farther north even than the Dovey. Meanwhile the Earl of Clare was making his power felt in the south. It was, indeed, a time of powerlessness for Wales. The Welsh princes were driven both in the north and the south to the mountains, where they

hid their weakness behind the natural strength of their country.

At last a truce was patched up through John de Gray, the new justice of Cheshire, and in April 1247 peace was made between the Welsh leaders and the king at Woodstock.

The peace then formed was, when judged by the ordinary Welsh standards, a lengthy one. It lasted, indeed, for eight years and some months. During that time Owain and Llywelyn were, by the terms of the treaty, reduced to the position of chieftains of Gwynedd, using that word in the lesser sense.

The years pass by uneventfully until we reach 1255. In that year, according to the chronicler, "by the instigation of the devil, a great discussion was engendered between . . . Owain the Red and David on the one side and Llywelyn on the other." The result of this inter-family feud was a victory for Llywelyn at Bryn Derwin, the flight of David (a younger brother), and the capture of Owain, who was promptly thrown into prison. Llywelyn was thus enabled to claim the leadership of all the Gwyneddians.

It was in the year following that the first steps were taken which resulted in the Welsh rising under Llywelyn. Edward, Earl of Chester, destined in future years to become the conqueror of Wales and one of England's great kings, came to Wales to take a general view of the state of the royal castles and demesnes in the north. The Welsh had anticipated some improvement in their position as a result of the princely visit. Geoffrey Langley, who had been given control of a large part of mid-Wales, had by his harsh conduct caused much discontent. The Welsh chieftains had been treated with scant respect, and they probably hoped for a redress of grievances from Edward. He came, he reviewed his castles, he saw that they were adequately garrisoned, he enjoyed himself with his boon companions—and returned, leaving the Welsh nobles utterly neglected and with their troubles unrelieved. The national character, quick to take an insult, ready on the instant to fly into a passion, asserted itself.

According to the *Brut*, "The nobles of Wales came to Llywelyn, son of Gruffudd, having been robbed of their liberty, and made captives, and complainingly declared to him that they would rather be killed in war for their liberty than suffer themselves to be trodden down by strangers in bondage." "Llywelyn," we are informed, "was moved to tears." Readily acceding to the demand for revenge, he combined with Maredudd ap Rhys Gryc, invaded the midland country, and within a week succeeded in making himself master of it. Meirionydd was seized, and that part of Ceredigion possessed by Edward was assigned by the Welsh leader to Maredudd ap Owain, great-grandson of the Lord Rhys, to whom was also given Builth. His ally, Maredudd ap Rhys Gryc, was established once again in Deheubarth. So far Llywelyn himself had gained little except "fame and regard," but later he succeeded in wresting Gwerthrynion from Roger Mortimer, which acquisition he kept for himself.

The two Maredudds and Llywelyn were again active in the year following. This time the territory of Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, a chieftain who, following the practice of his house, had adhered rather to the king than to the Welsh leaders, was the objective. Powys was overrun. The allies penetrated as far as the Severn valley. Welshpool was burnt, Bydydon (Bodyddon) Castle was destroyed. Indeed, little escaped the onslaught of Llywelyn and his supporters save part of the vale of Severn and a portion of Caereinion—the centre of Gruffydd's strength. Trallwng Castle,[1] however, held out.

It was in the June of this year that the next event of importance took place. Rhys Vychan had sought English aid to regain his rights. Supported by Bauzan, a royal officer, and a considerable force, Rhys prepared to attack Dynevor. The two Maredudds were, however, well posted around the town and prepared to prevent any further advance. After a few skirmishes the opposing parties were ready to come to blows, when Rhys forsook his English ally. The Welsh attacked, Bauzan's forces broke and fled. They were pursued,

[1] Pool Castle.

brought to bay, and completely defeated at a battle fought at Cymerau.[1]

The Welsh party were now in the ascendant. The deserter, Rhys, had joined Llywelyn and his allies. Castle after castle fell before them. Cemais was subdued; with the aid of Rhys, Trevdraeth [2] was attacked and its castle destroyed; Rhos was raided and the country ravaged as far as Haverford; Glamorgan was invaded and the castle of Llan Geneu (or Llangynwyd) burnt. The chronicler adds that after these many victories "they returned home, having killed many and captured others."

The English Government had not ignored these revolts and reverses. After the defeat of Bauzan at Cymerau steps had been taken to raise an army for the subjugation of Llywelyn and his allies. By August Henry had got together a considerable force, which he led in person to Deganwy, where he remained, effecting little, until September. Irish aid had been looked for, but it did not come, and the king appears to have suddenly abandoned all further effort to check Llywelyn, and shortly afterward retired on Chester, harassed all the way by the Welsh, who, as was their custom, contented themselves with cutting off stragglers.

Another Welsh chieftain now hurried to the victorious Llywelyn. Gruffydd ap Madog, of the princely house of Powys, became reconciled to the chieftain of Gwynedd, despite the fact that his kinsman, Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, was still at enmity with Llywelyn. Llywelyn was now almost as powerful as his grandfather. Gwenwynwyn's son soon felt his power, and, being too weak to resist, was driven into banishment.

### Llywelyn Prince of Wales

The years which followed saw Llywelyn the admitted leader of the Welsh people. In 1258 the Welsh chieftains took an oath of fidelity to him under pain of excommunication, and

[1] See as to this Lloyd's *History of Wales*, vol. ii, p. 720, *n.* 23.
[2] Trevdraeth = Newport.

he is found from now onward adopting the style and title of 'Prince of Wales.' This solemn oath had established Llywelyn as leader of his countrymen, it had consolidated his power, but it was not strong enough to prevent Maredudd ap Rhys attempting to gain a personal advantage at the price of his honour. He had been one of the nobles to take the oath, but he quickly broke it and passed over to the English side. Llywelyn now showed himself as ready to punish faithlessness as in earlier years he had been to support loyalty. Maredudd's lands were invaded and ravaged, he himself was attacked and severely wounded, and in the year following accused of treason, condemned, and imprisoned.

The years which followed were comparatively uneventful. In 1258 Llywelyn had effected a protective alliance with the Scots; in 1259 a truce was patched up with the English. In 1260 a determined attack was made upon Builth, and Roger Mortimer was driven back on his castle there, the rest of that district being occupied by the Welsh. Fresh successes brought fresh support, and Owain ap Maredudd of Elvael, who had previously stood aloof from the national party, now threw in his lot with theirs. Later in 1260 Builth Castle fell through treachery, and Roger Mortimer had to be content to see one of his newest strongholds burnt to the ground. The result of this success was the addition of the men of Maelienydd to Llywelyn's imposing list of supporters.

It was not until 1263 that any further attack of moment was made by the Welsh. The English, for their part, were too much occupied with the struggle between the king and his barons, which in 1264 was to result in the battle of Lewes, to take any steps to recover from Llywelyn the gains he had obtained. In less than twenty years the Welsh leader had raised himself from the position of a joint sharer of a petty chieftaincy to that of acknowledged Prince of Wales. The English king had made several abortive attempts to reduce him to submission. English and Welsh nobles had felt his power. He had attained this position largely by reason of his own personality, partly in consequence of the weakness of

the English king. How much of his success was due to his personal qualities is shown by the letter written by Henry on hearing a rumour of Llywelyn's death. Everything appears to have been thought of for a thorough absorption of Wales. But Llywelyn was not dead, and while he lived no steps were taken to carry out the complicated plan.

The Welsh leader was strangely quiet during the years 1261–1262. Of course there was the truce, but truces easily gave way before opportunity, and England was singularly weak during those years. In 1260 Edward had for a short time joined forces with Simon de Montfort against his father; Leicester had been charged with treason. In 1261 Henry had appealed to the Pope, and a bull issued releasing Henry from his promises and allowing him to annul the Provisions of Oxford. As a result the barons were once more united against their king. The bull being rendered valueless for the time being by the death of the Pope (Alexander IV), some semblance of peace was patched up in the winter of 1261, but a new bull was granted by Urban IV early in 1262, confirming the earlier one. Montfort returned from the Continent (where he had been since the autumn of 1261) and rallied the baronial party. By January 1263 the pressure on the king had become so great that he was compelled to confirm the Provisions.

It was during this anxious time for England that Wales chose to be so curiously peaceful. It is true that toward the end of 1262 a raid was made on Maelienydd, and Roger Mortimer's castle of Cefnllys was attacked and Humphrey de Bohun's relieving force defeated. Roger himself was brought to his knees, but was treated magnanimously by his kinsman Llywelyn, being allowed to depart without injury on promise of crossing the border. The movement, however, was isolated and comparatively unimportant.

While the Welsh refrained from attacking the English, Prince Edward, who had been granted large estates in North Wales, had also taken little interest in his Welsh possessions, and had made practically no attempt to gain in fact what was his, from the English point of view, by law. Early in

1263, it is true, he led a force to the relief of Diserth and Deganwy, but he was soon recalled. The English desire for peace can, of course, be readily understood: England itself was on the very brink of civil war; but there must have been some good reason for Llywelyn's attitude. It may be that he was ill; it is more probable that he was in conflict with his brother David. We find that in 1263 David had quarrelled openly with his brother and crossed the border into England with his adherents, completely abandoning the Welsh party for the king. There is another explanation of Llywelyn's peaceful policy. It is not improbable that he took advantage of the conflict between king and barons to consolidate his own position rather than to weaken his opponent's. As a result of his management of public affairs he was so strong that when David rose against him—probably at the instigation of Edward—he replied by overrunning north-eastern Wales even to the gates of Chester, and Diserth and Deganwy were forced to surrender.

It is generally accepted that during this campaign the Welsh were acting, if not in alliance with, at least with the approval of, the barons as against the royal party. The capitulation and destruction of Diserth and Deganwy had been a severe loss to Edward, and he took steps to cause a breach in the ranks of the barons and their Welsh supporters. In 1264, however, de Montfort was clearly in alliance with Llywelyn. The Mortimer[1] and Bohun lands were ravaged and their castles taken. In the meantime Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn of Powys, who until now had been antagonistic to Llywelyn, acknowledged him as overlord, and by 1264 the chronicler could rightly call Llywelyn Prince of all Wales. Later in that year, and after de Montfort's victory at Lewes, Llywelyn rendered valuable aid to the great Earl Simon by harassing the marcher lords who still held out for the king. As the price of his support Llywelyn had extracted generous terms from de Montfort—terms which were vastly improved upon at the conference at Pipton in June. Llywelyn was

[1] Mortimer had recently deserted the popular party.

recognized as Prince of Wales and overlord of all the Welsh chieftains. All the territory taken from Llywelyn the Great or his successors was restored, and Pain's Castle, Hawarden, and Whittington were expressly granted to the Welsh leader. Llywelyn was to render the aid of an ally, and was to pay 30,000 marks.

Llywelyn was now at the very height of his power. What his position would have been had de Montfort succeeded in his struggle against the royal power it is impossible to say. As we know, Earl Simon was even at this time hard pressed. Edward had escaped in May, Gloucester had defected from de Montfort's side, the marchers were assembling a formidable force in support of Edward. The struggle came suddenly to an end in August, when at Evesham Edward was completely victorious and de Montfort was slain.

The fall of de Montfort was a blow to Llywelyn, who had adventured something in his cause. But Edward was still by no means free to devote his attention to the Welsh. The de Montfort party was still a force to be reckoned with though the great Earl of Leicester was dead. Chester, however, was reoccupied, and Cheshire freed from the Welsh. On the other hand, Llywelyn gained some small successes, and on the whole maintained his position. Finally, in 1267 peace was arranged between Henry and Llywelyn through the mediation of Octobonus (Ottobon), the papal legate, and the Treaty of Montgomery was signed.[1]

This peace was a signal triumph for the Welsh leader. He was confirmed in his title of Prince of Wales; he was regarded as the overlord of the Welsh chieftains, with the exception of Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn and Maredudd ap Rhys. He was also granted the four cantrefs previously held by Prince Edward, together with many castles lately held or claimed by

[1] Ottobon met Llywelyn's ambassadors at Shrewsbury, and the treaty of peace was signed there on September 25. This peace is sometimes referred to as the Treaty of Shrewsbury. It was not ratified by Llywelyn, however, until Michaelmas Day, when that prince met Henry at Montgomery, rendered homage, and formally made peace. We call it, therefore, as is customary in works on Welsh history, the Treaty or Peace of Montgomery.

the English. In return for these very great concessions Llywelyn was only required to sign the treaty of peace and to promise a sum of 25,000 marks, which was made payable by instalments.

The terms of the treaty show Llywelyn's strength. They show still more clearly England's weakness. Edward evidently found it necessary to purchase peace at any price. His country was completely exhausted by the struggles of the preceding years. In the early part of the year Gilbert, Earl of Gloucester, with Welsh aid, had marched upon London and had been well received, and Ottobon had been captured. Gloucester, it is true, had eventually submitted, and Llywelyn was isolated from any powerful English ally, but the royal party was still fearful of further risings, and peace was essential for the consolidation of its forces. Even so, however, it is greatly to the credit of the Welsh leader that Ottobon found it possible to congratulate himself upon such a peace. It left Llywelyn virtually an independent Prince of Wales, owning but a technical feudal overlordship in the king. From the Welsh point of view the terms were as good as, or better than, those offered by de Montfort at Pipton.

## From the Peace of Montgomery to the Edwardian Conquest

For the next ten years Wales was at peace. During those years many of the participators in the earlier struggles passed from the stage of history. Anian, Bishop of St. Asaph, and Richard, Bishop of Bangor, died in 1266 and 1267 respectively. Maredudd ap Owain had already been buried at Strata Florida when Gruffydd ap Madog of northern Powys (Maelor), once the friend of England, but in his later years the ally of Llywelyn, left his fortress of Dinas Brân for his final resting-place in Valle Crucis.[1] Howel and Madog, Gruffydd's brothers, pass from the scene about the same time. Maredudd ap Rhys, whose friendship with England in the later years of his life had carried him from the side of Llywelyn and the national

[1] He died in 1269.

party—a piece of faithlessness which made it necessary for the English to put a special clause in the Treaty of Montgomery for his protection—died two years later. Rhys Vychan of Deheubarth and Maredudd ap Howel of the chieftains of Gwynllwg are lesser names which are now lost sight of.

But though death had been busy in the ranks of his friends and his enemies, it left untouched Llywelyn's own family. Unmarried, he possessed no descendants of his own, but of brothers he had several, and each of them was a source of perpetual trouble and anxiety to him. His eldest brother, Owain Goch, had long been kept in captivity. A younger one, Rhodri, had also been imprisoned, but eventually succeeded (about 1272) in escaping to England. David, the youngest brother, who had already shown a capacity for treachery, had been especially protected by the Treaty of Montgomery. He took advantage of his freedom to enter into a conspiracy with Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, his wife and son Owain, to assassinate Llywelyn. The evil plot was perfected in 1274. David's daughter was to marry Owain, David was to become Prince of Wales, the house of Powys was to gain Kerry and Cydewain. The plot was discovered. David fled to England; messengers were sent to Gruffydd at Pool to demand an explanation. Gruffydd, after at first entertaining them lavishly, flung the messengers into prison, ordered the castle to be defended, and with his family and chattels escaped to Shrewsbury. Llywelyn quickly avenged the wrong done to his envoys. Pool Castle was attacked and destroyed; Gruffydd's lands were occupied without opposition and reduced to possession.

Two years before this sign of weakness in Wales Henry III of England had died. He had been succeeded by his son, Edward I, who possessed qualities peculiarly suitable for the conquest of Wales. Determined, clear-headed, equally admirable at the council-board as in battle, Edward had also considerable experience with Welsh affairs. He had learnt that compared with their valour in the hills the Welsh were tame fighters in the lowlands. He knew from experience how a

strong castle was more valuable than many men in a country which could not be subdued in a moment, and which did not yield enough produce to feed an army for a month. It was in the August of 1274 that this destined conqueror of Wales was crowned. To the coronation were summoned Alexander of Scotland and Llywelyn of Wales, both to do homage. The former responded, the latter did not.

The reason for the refusal is not obvious. During Henry's lifetime the terms of the Treaty of Montgomery had been faithfully kept. Even in 1273 Llywelyn was on friendly terms with the English, though two years before he had been launching a second attack upon Gilbert of Gloucester's partially built castle of Caerphilly. But after Henry's death there commences to be trouble over the money payments required by the treaty; Llywelyn refused to do homage; the two leaders were slowly drifting to a conflict. The matter came to a head with Llywelyn's refusal to appear at Edward's coronation and with Edward's friendly reception of David and Gruffydd, who, as we have seen, had fled from Wales on the plot they had hatched against Llywelyn's life being discovered. It would appear, indeed, that Llywelyn's refusal was due to his fear that a king who could receive his would-be assassins could also take his life. This at least is the main reason given by him in his letter to the Pope.

There was another fact which determined Llywelyn to prepare to fight. He saw that war with England was almost unavoidable. He also saw that to meet such an enemy without allies or supporters would inevitably result in defeat. The Welsh leader seems, therefore, to have decided to carry on the de Montfort tradition, ally himself with that house, and make a bid for the support of the more discontented section of the English baronage. The movement was naturally regarded with some concern by Edward, for, although the baronial trouble was dying down, England, as we have said, needed peace. The king accordingly took steps to thwart Llywelyn's purpose. Eleanor, daughter to Earl Simon, whose hand had been promised to Llywelyn as far back as 1265, set

out for Wales from France under the escort of her brother, Amaury, in 1275. The purpose of her visit was, of course, her intended marriage with Llywelyn. Edward, however, had no mind to permit this union, and intercepted Eleanor and her brother while yet on the sea. Llywelyn's wished-for bride was detained at the queen's court; Amaury was imprisoned in Corfe Castle.

It is evident that at that time Llywelyn did not feel himself strong enough to resist Edward, for even with his bride captured and virtually imprisoned he refrained from any acts of war. The year 1276 passed by without hostilities having commenced, though Llywelyn's continued refusal to do homage save under impossible conditions had driven Edward to call a council of war in the November of that year. At that council it was decided to bring Llywelyn to submission, and levies were summoned for the summer of 1277. Roger Mortimer was sent to Montgomery, Warwick to Chester, and Pain of Chaworth to Caermarthen. The marcher lords were also required to raise their tenants to aid the king.

The essential weakness of Llywelyn's position was now made evident. It became apparent that for many years a process of absorption had been going on. No longer were Welshman and Norman utterly alien or bitterly hostile. No longer on the threatening advance of an English army did the Welsh ranks close up to unite in one solid body to withstand their common enemy. Now the men of the middle march welcomed Mortimer; Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn sided with the marchers against Llywelyn, and was restored to Upper Powys. The men of Bromfield, Elvael, Llandovery, Brecon, and Dynevor passed over to the king's side. Pain of Chaworth reduced Ceredigion to submission without any serious engagement being fought.

The dying down of racial hatred and the continuance of tribal jealousies had thus resulted in a few months in the reduction of Llywelyn from the position of Prince of Wales to that of chieftain of Gwynedd, and by this time the levies summoned in the previous November had mustered at

PLATE XLIX. QUEEN ELEANOR'S CHAMBER, CONWAY CASTLE
*Photo Owen Evans, Conway*

Worcester. Nearly a thousand lances followed Edward to Chester, which was made the base of operations.

Edward's plan of campaign seems to have been to shut Llywelyn up in his mountain fastnesses and to starve him into submission. In pursuance of this objective he pushed on in the mountainous district of Eryri, following the northern coast route, clearing forests away as he went to prevent his men being picked off by the Welsh bowmen, and having his main force protected from hostile attack by the fleet from the Cinque Ports, which sailed close in to the coast. By the end of August Deganwy had been reached, and the line of communication protected by forts built at Flint and Rhuddlan. Meanwhile the king's forces had been considerably augmented, and now numbered not less than 16,000 soldiers, besides numerous sappers and miners. The army once safe in Deganwy, the fleet was dispatched to Anglesey to prevent supplies of corn being sent from there to Llywelyn, now at bay in Eryri. The movement was successful, and the crops of Môn were gathered to feed English soldiers. Meanwhile Llywelyn and his men were threatened with starvation, and realizing that the position was hopeless, the prince submitted on the 9th of November.

### The Treaty of Conway, or Aberconway

As a result of his submission Llywelyn was compelled to accept the rigorous terms of the Treaty of Conway. By it he surrendered the whole of South and Central Wales, and also the country between Conway and the Dee. His title of prince had gone, his overlordship had gone, and he was reduced once more to the position of chief of Gwynedd above Conway and lord of some minor nobles, including Rhys Vychan. His brother Owain he was forced to release and establish in Lleyn, and David was made lord of Rhufoniog, Dyffryn Clwyd, and Hope. Llywelyn was also required to pay a yearly rent for his holding, and a heavy war indemnity. These last two provisions were, however, remitted after he had made his formal submission at Rhuddlan.

Edward seems now to have extended his policy of conciliation even to his late enemy. Although he compelled Llywelyn's attendance at the Christmas court at Westminster, he consented in the year following to the solemnization of the marriage between Llywelyn and Eleanor, a marriage which took place at Winchester, Edward, according to the *Brut*, "bearing the cost of the banquet and nuptial festivities liberally." But though his policy as regards Llywelyn would have made for peace, his desire to introduce the English shire system into Wales sowed the seeds of future conflict. Welsh law was banished from the marcher courts, Welsh customs were treated as of no worth or force. The shire organization of Ceredigion, or Cardiganshire, and Caermarthenshire was revived. Royal officials were sprinkled all over Wales, and, like most such, used their brief authority to grind down the people over whom they had power. The result was discontent, a quiet anger which smouldered on for more than four years, and then, on March 21, 1282, burst into flame.

### The Rising of 1282

The fatal David was the first to rise in rebellion. It may be that he had hoped for more than Edward had cared to give him. Whatever the cause, we find him on the day before Palm Sunday attacking Hawarden Castle, which soon yielded. His action was the signal for a general rising. The men of the south attacked Carreg Cennen, Aberystwyth, and Llandovery Castles; Llywelyn, eagerly throwing in his lot with his countrymen, crossed the Conway and directed an unsuccessful attack upon the royal strongholds at Flint and Rhuddlan.

Edward quickly took action. Levies were summoned, and Gilbert of Gloucester was ordered to reconquer the Vale of Towy. On June 16 or 17 the earl's men were attacked, however, at Llandeilo Fawr and defeated, Gloucester being driven back on Caermarthen. In the meantime Llywelyn was hurrying south from the north, and succeeded in keeping in check the English forces under William of Valence, who had succeeded Gilbert of Gloucester.

Edward, meanwhile, had reached Rhuddlan, at which place he remained, fearing to risk an attack upon Gwynedd while David (who was posted at Denbigh) threatened his flanks. At last, however, David was dislodged by the Earl of Lincoln, and about the same time Reginald Grey obtained control of Ruthin, and Earl Warenne seized Bromfield and Yale. Llywelyn had now returned to Eryri, where he had been joined by David. It was against Snowdonia, therefore, that Edward now directed his army.

It had early been seen by Edward, who had the memories of the 1277 campaign fresh in his mind, that it was necessary to gain control of Anglesey and its corn. In pursuance of this purpose Luke de Tany, Seneschal of Gascony, had been sent to conquer Môn with a few of the men of Aquitaine. The expedition was at first successful, and by September Anglesey was under his control, and communication was established with the mainland by means of a pontoon. It would seem that about November 6 Tany made some sort of attempt to attack Llywelyn's main army. The Welsh, however, easily overwhelmed the Frenchman's small force, and drove them back to their slender bridge of boats, which, giving way before the rush of the panic-stricken men, precipitated many into the water, including their leader, who was drowned.

It was shortly after this that Peckham's ill-conceived attempt at mediation was made. Llywelyn was offered an English estate of the value of £1000 a year in exchange for his claims to Welsh soil. The overture was not accepted, and the struggle continued.

A position of stalemate had now practically been reached. The king had maintained the war for a length of time for which feudal levies were unfitted, and most of his English soldiers had returned to their homes. He was desperately in need of money, and only a fixed determination to bring Wales finally to submission could have persuaded him to continue the campaign over the winter. Llywelyn, on the other hand, was safe in Snowdon's fastnesses. But, though safe, he was quite impotent. With the south by no means closed to him,

he was not threatened with starvation as in 1277, but on the other hand he could strike no effective blow against Edward.

It was at this juncture that Llywelyn determined to take advantage of the recent death of Roger Mortimer to strengthen his position in the south and east. He made his way toward Builth, and would appear to have been engaged upon the reduction of Builth Castle when the misfortune occurred which resulted in his death and in the practical termination of the Welsh resistance.

It was while his followers were holding the passage of the Yrfon at Orewyn Bridge that Llywelyn, deeming their position secure for the time being, left his troops for the purpose, according to Professor Tout, of conferring with some local chieftains. In his absence the English crossed the stream at another place and attacked the Welsh in the rear. Messengers were sent to Llywelyn requesting his return, and he was hurrying back to lead his men when he was met by Stephen Frankton, a Shropshire lanceman, and slain. The identity of his victim was unknown to the death-dealer until, on searching the body, he found documents that made it clear that this was the famous Llywelyn, once Prince of all Wales. As was usual in those days, the chieftain once recognized, his head was struck off and sent to the king, who, after exhibiting it to his army, dispatched it to London. The body was eventually buried at Cwm Hir.

With the death of Llywelyn the struggle practically came to an end. For a few months longer David continued to wage some sort of resistance, but in June 1283 he was betrayed by his own men, and in the October following was put to death, after a trial at the Parliament convened at Shrewsbury.

Llywelyn on his death left no male descendants. His wife, Eleanor, had died in child-birth shortly after their union. The child, Gwenllian, was destined to end her days an unwilling nun in the convent of Sempringham.

The time had come, indeed, when Wales was to begin to combine with England to form a united country. The process of absorption which had been progressing silently for centuries

had at last prepared the Welsh for amalgamation with the English. As we shall see, the juncture did not take place at once or in a moment. Many grievances arose which had to be redressed. Rebellions, some small, some large, broke out. For years there was a feeling of enmity between English and Welsh in the border counties. But at last Welsh aid in the French wars and a Welsh king on the English throne completed what Edward's conquest had commenced—the amalgamation of Wales and England.

# CHAPTER XX

## FROM THE CONQUEST TO OWAIN GLYNDWR

THE triumph of Edward marks the end of the history of Wales as a separate, independent state. All that remains for us now to do is to trace the development of certain trends which have the appearance of being of a national character. In particular we shall have to consider the rising of the Welsh under Owain Glyndwr—a movement which was like to cost Henry IV his crown had it not been for the perverse self-complacency of Hotspur. For the rest, however, the history of Wales as a separate nation is already told. As we read in the *Historie of Cambria*, "Prince Llywelyn and his brother David being so basely taken off, and leaving nobody to lay any specious claim to the principality of Wales, King Edward, by a statute made at Ruthlan [Rhuddlan], incorporated and annexed it to the Crown of England." This important statute, which was virtually an act of annexation, shows its purpose in the preamble, which runs as follows: "Edward, by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to all his subjects of his land of Snowdon and of other his lands in Wales, greeting in the Lord. The Divine Providence, which is unerring in its own government, among other gifts of its dispensation wherewith it hath vouchsafed to distinguish us and our realm of England, hath now of its favour wholly and entirely transferred under our proper dominion the land of Wales, with its inhabitants heretofore subject unto us in feudal right, all obstacles whatsoever ceasing, and hath annexed and united the same unto the Crown of the aforesaid realm as a member of the same body."

The result of this *Statuta Wallie* was to separate North Wales from the marches. The eastern part of Wales was divided into counties [1] and placed under the English system of local government; sheriffs and other officers were appointed; the English mode of legal procedure was established; the office of coroner was introduced; the king's writs were made to run in Wales; the assize, the jury, essoins, and vouching to warranty in the English manner were also introduced; the English law of dower took the place of the old Welsh law relating to goods in communion and division on separation and *da*.

In one important particular, however, the old Welsh system still lived on. The Welsh mode of inheritance of land, not according to the law of primogeniture, but according to a custom similar to that existing in Kent to-day,[2] was preserved. In the future as in the past Welsh land descended, not to the eldest son, but to all heirs equally. But one change was made even here. Edward expressly excluded natural children from inheriting (at least where there were legitimate children). Welsh civil procedure and the old Welsh law of theft (very similar in many ways to the equally old Halifax gibbet-law) were also preserved to a certain extent, but in general the English criminal law was substituted for the Welsh.

It will be observed that the preamble to the *Statuta Wallie* relates to Snowdon and the Welsh lands lying around. It did not apply to the marcher lands. As Sir David Brynmor Jones points out, the result was "to create formally an important distinction between the Principality land and the marchers." It must also be remembered that the marches included all land, wherever situated, which was under the control of a marcher lord. He retained considerable seigneurial rights,

[1] The counties thus formed were Anglesey, Carnarvonshire, and Merionethshire. The shire system was also introduced into or perfected in Flintshire, Caermarthenshire, and Cardiganshire.

[2] As Sir Henry Maine pointed out many years ago, there are leading differences between the two systems. For our purpose, however, they are similar. The Kentish custom is likely to be abolished if the Real Property Bill introduced in 1914 is passed.

including power to sentence to death for criminal offences or to pardon, and the king's writ did not run in the marches. He had his own chancery and his own courts. He could hold pleas of all actions at law. He could create boroughs. He had, in fact, the *jura regalia*, and was in much the same position as a palatine earl.

When we remember that according to Lord Herbert of Chirbury there were at one time no fewer than 141 lordship marchers, it can be imagined that the conflict of custom and the divergences in the standards of justice were considerable. It would appear that this diversity of law and custom was added to by the existence in some lordships of two courts, one for the English tenants, the other for the Welsh, and in the two different law was applied. As Stephen says,[1] "So much of Wales as had not been brought under the *Statutum Walliae* by Edward I continued till the 27 Henry VIII (1535) to be governed by a number of petty chiefs called lords marchers."

The evils which sprang from these many jurisdictions had an important bearing on the history of Wales for the next two centuries. With so many masters having rule over them, it is not to be wondered at that the Welsh were discontented and eventually rose in rebellion. It has been suggested comparatively recently that the main cause of the rising under Owain Glyndwr was the Black Death, with its resulting misery. That there is much probability in this suggestion is certain, but it should also be remembered that the Welsh had been groaning for over a century under seigneurial jurisdictions without any native protectors to guard them from real oppression, as had been the case in the earlier years of the struggle between Welsh and Norman and Welsh and English.[2] As we shall see in a subsequent chapter, when a Welshman was at last upon the throne of England an attempt was made to develop

[1] *History of Criminal Law*, vol. i, p. 142.

[2] Had the English law as administered in the royal courts been introduced and the seigneurial jurisdictions pruned there would probably have been no great feeling against it. See Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, vol. i, pp. 220, 221.

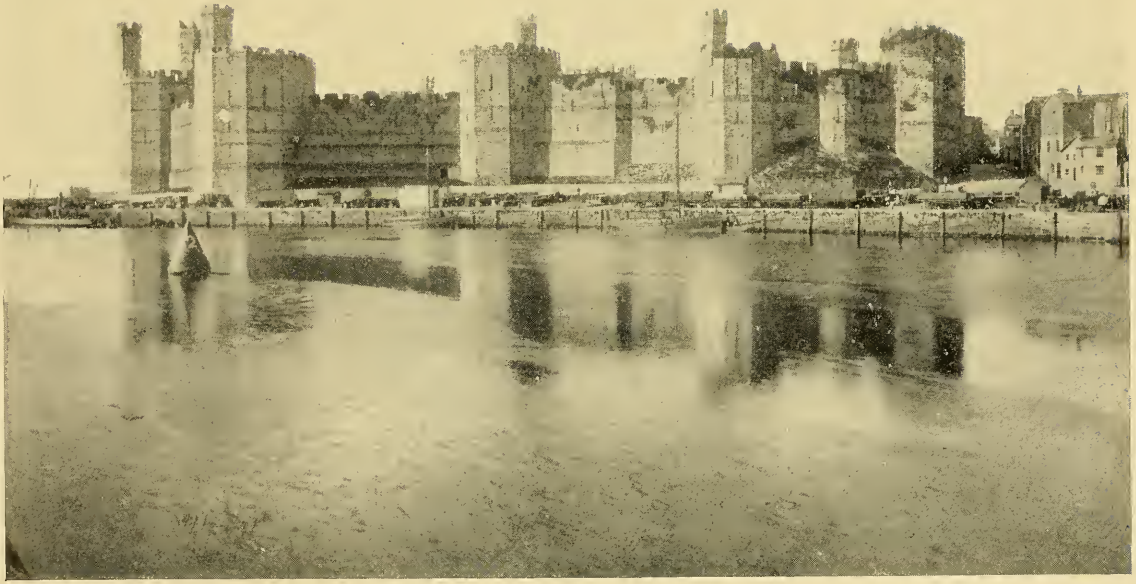


PLATE L. CAERNARVON CASTLE

*Photo Frith*

the prince's court into a Council of the Marches sufficiently well equipped and powerful to combat the marcher lords. Injustice was checked, and with it lawlessness. But that great reform lay far in the future.

### Revolt

We have now roughly sketched out the position as regards the administration, or maladministration, of law under the new *régime*. There is every reason to believe that the Welsh were labouring under some very real grievances after the overthrow of Llywelyn. As Powel tells us, the Welsh did not love the English; they could not forget the oppressions and "intolerable insolences" of the English administrators. As to the Caernarvon Castle fraud, we pass it by in silence. Whether Edward really hoped to comfort the Welsh by cracking his little joke about the prince who could not speak a word of English we know not. It is certain that his subsequent grants of lordships and towns upon English followers cannot but have roused opposition among the Welsh.

There was one Welshman who must have felt particularly bitter at the turn affairs were taking. Rhys ap Maredudd, the traitor who had sold Llywelyn, hoping to obtain the more from the English, had gained but little by his treachery. He had seen the English encroaching more and more, and had lost his right to hold court or to judge his fellow-countrymen. Finally, the bitterest blow fell when he was cited to serve on a jury [1] before the justice Robert de Tippetot.[2] Rhys indignantly refused, alleging his ancient privileges and liberties as his excuse. He was to learn that a new order of things had come. Proceedings were instituted against him. Rhys retaliated by calling up his tenants. After some delay, caused by the king's promise to redress all grievances, he attacked his enemies' lands and "burnt and spoiled several towns belonging to the English." The Earl of Cornwall, however, who was sent to

[1] This is doubtful. We have accepted Powel's language. He says, "cited with all the rest of the country." If he were speaking technically, 'country' means jury.

[2] Later spelt 'Tiptoft.'

quell the rising, had little difficulty in putting down this small rebellion and in overthrowing Rhys' castle of Dryslwyn. His main loss, indeed, was caused, not by Rhys' followers, but by the walls of the castle falling unexpectedly upon the besiegers while they were mining them.

Rhys, however, was not content to remain under the heel of Tippetot. We consequently find him in 1290 raising another insurrection. This time Tippetot himself replied. According to Powel, Tippetot organized a strong force, with which, after the slaughter of 4000 (?) of the Welsh, he took Rhys prisoner. The Michaelmas following saw the end of this Welshman. Sent to York—where Edward was staying on his way to Scotland—he was tried and condemned to death. He was dragged to execution by horses in the manner so common in those days.

A more serious rising occurred in 1294. Wales was still sullenly discontented. Edward's demand requiring service in Gascony was resented in Wales as fiercely as in England and the marches. The new tax of a fifteenth on chattels was an added grievance. In Michaelmas 1294, the Welsh plans having matured, the signal for revolt went forth, and all Wales rose up in one final attempt for freedom. The leader, Madog (possibly a natural son of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd), led the men of Gwynedd and seized Caernarvon Castle. Maelgwn Vychan at the head of the West Welsh captured Caermarthen and Cardigan. The marches were on fire. The men of Rhos and Rhufoniog laid siege to Denbigh, and the castles of Flint were in danger. Glamorgan rose against Gilbert of Gloucester, whose strong castle of Caerphilly, though impregnable itself, was unable to overawe the countryside. Morgan, their leader, was, however, careful to make clear that his grievance was against the earl, not against the king.

The position was so grave that Edward postponed his French campaign. The Gascon levies, then at Portsmouth, were hurried to the Severn. Criminals were pardoned on promise to serve against the Welsh and in Gascony. By such means a thousand men-at-arms had been gathered under the

royal standard by Christmas, and meanwhile the marcher lords had mustered their retainers.

In the meantime the levies from Portsmouth, under Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, and Henry Lacy, had been met by the Welsh at Denbigh and defeated. Edward, however, after keeping Christmas at Aberconway, determined to lead his troops in person, and to push on still further into the interior. The Welsh met with a slight success in capturing most of the king's baggage. Floods also aided them, cutting off Conway from supplies, so that we are informed that "the king with all his followers were constrained to endure a great deal of hardships, insomuch that at last water mixed with honey, and very coarse ordinary bread, with the saltest meat, were accounted the greatest delicacies for his Majesty's own table." Edward, however, won the admiration of his followers by sharing with them the rigours of the campaign, and refused to drink a bottle of wine which his followers had carefully preserved for him, saying that since he had brought them to that pass it was but right to suffer equally with those whom he led. At last the floods subsided, Edward was joined by his main force, and the Welsh, realizing that further resistance was for the time being impossible, avoided further engagements. Edward, on the other hand, contented himself with cutting down many of the woods so troublesome to an advancing army, and with building the castle of Beaumaris in Anglesey and strengthening and fortifying the other royal castles in Wales.[1]

The king having retired, Madog once more rose in revolt. He succeeded in capturing Oswestry and in defeating the forces brought against him by Lord Strange. At last, however, William Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who had already inflicted heavy loss on the Welsh by adopting tactics then new, but later destined to win for England such victories as Crécy and Poitiers, leading the marcher forces, met and decisively defeated Madog after a bloody battle fought upon the hills of

[1] It should be remembered that after the conquest Edward had castled Snowdonia and North Wales.

Cefn Digoll, near Cemais Castle. The Welsh leader was captured and imprisoned in the Tower, and with the dropping of the portcullis of that historic stronghold behind him the last great insurrection in Wales until the time of Owain Glyndwr was at an end.

### Peace

The Welsh now commenced to settle down to live the lives of peaceful citizens. The new order of things was not an unmixed evil. The Statute of Rhuddlan had given wide powers to the sheriff to repress crime. We read that he was empowered to make inquiry into very many offences, from treason to those committed by whittaws—*i.e.* those who whitened hides of oxen and horses, knowing the same to have been stolen, so that they might not be capable of identification—and by redubbers of stolen clothes, who turned stolen costumes into new shapes for a like reason, and those committed by men who were apparently in the habit of stealing pigeons from dovecotes. The coroner also had been empowered to deal with thieves, manslayers, and other malefactors, for we read that when such criminals "shall fly to the church, the coroner, as soon as he shall be certified thereof, shall direct the bailiff of our lord the king for that commote to cause to come before him at a certain day the good and lawful men of the neighbourhood; and in their presence, after recognition made of the felony, shall cause the abjuration to be made in this manner: That the felon shall be brought out unto the church door, and a seaport shall be assigned him by the coroner, and then he shall abjure the realm; and, according as the port assigned shall be far or near, the term shall be set for his going out of the realm aforesaid: So that in journeying toward that port, bearing in his hand a cross, he shall not in any manner turn out of the king's highway, that is to say, neither upon the right hand nor upon the left, but shall always hold to the same until he shall depart the realm."

It will be seen from these and like ordinances that the English Government was determined to repress the lawlessness

for which Wales had for years been notorious. The result was soon evident. The Welsh quickly found that the new state of things favoured commerce, and the people that in the time of Giraldus had despised trade and had regarded it as unworthy of a free man now began to apply themselves to making money. The period was, indeed, one of great expansion in the world of business, not only in Wales, but in England also. Boroughs were becoming common ; charters granting fair and market rights are found by the hundred in the later years of Edward I and the early years of Edward II's reign. In 1299 the statute *De Falsa Moneta* had been passed, and letters ordering the suppression of bad coinage, etc., had been sent to all the sheriffs of England and to others, including Reginald de Grey, Justice of Chester, Walter de Pederton, Justice of North Wales, and John de Havering, Justice of West Wales. Welsh towns were receiving grants of borough rights throughout the fourteenth century, and special grants were made to the men of Harlech. Caermarthen, again, had been specially favoured from much earlier times, and the old privileges were confirmed.

It is not to be expected, however, that a conquered country will immediately submit to the commands and demands of the conqueror. Throughout the early years of Edward II's reign there are numerous references in the *Calendar of Close Rolls* to Wales, many of them being directed to Roger de Mortuo Mari (Mortimer), Justice of Wales, who is frequently ordered to see that the king's castles in Wales are fortified and well guarded. We also find him (in 1309) ordered not to appoint Welshmen to fill the offices of sheriff and bailiff if he can find Englishmen. The Welsh also suffered from the marchers, and in 1316 we find the men of Powys flying to Merioneth on account of the dissensions in Powys between John de Cherleton and his wife Hawise, and Griffin de la Pole. In the main, however, the years following the rebellion of Madog had been quiet.

In 1316 a small insurrection broke out under the leadership of Llywelyn Bran. In February of that year we read of the

king sending Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, to quell the rising of the Welsh. In the March following we have an order addressed to Humphrey directing him to cause Llywelyn, his wife, children, and others, "who lately rose against the king in Wales and then surrendered," to be taken to the Tower of London. Another order was directed to John de Crumbwell (Cromwell), Constable of the Tower, "to receive the same and keep them safely." The rebellion, indeed, had been of less importance than the English Government had been led to expect. Orders given to John de Grey and John de Cherleton to aid in suppressing the rising in Powys were countermanded in the same month, the opposition being at an end. The Welsh captives seem to have been well treated. Documents exist authorizing the payment of 3*d.* a day to Llywelyn Bran and Leukina his wife and 2*d.* a day to his sons and supporters while in the Tower.

Apart from this short-lived rebellion Wales seems to have gradually settled down. Edward II had doubtless many pleasant memories of the days he had spent as prince in Wales and on the borders. His reign is certainly marked by many attempts to arrive at a friendly understanding with the gallant little country of the west. In 1321 we find orders to suppress risings against the king being given, not to Mortimers or Greys, but to Rhys ap Gruffydd of West Wales and South Wales and to Sir Gruffydd ap Rhys in North Wales. In 1328, again, we have a reference to Master Rhys Appowel (or ap Howel), who is described as "the late king's justice in South Wales and West Wales," and an order is made for the payment of the arrears of his accustomed fees for that office.

The same conciliatory spirit is shown in the review of the extents made during Edward II's reign. Even the villeins were able to get an order reducing the amounts payable, and in 1325 we find the villeins of the king's manor of Penrhos in Anglesey getting a rebate of £21 7*s.* 0½*d.*, John de Grey, Justice of North Wales, having examined into the matter and having found that the villeins of that manor had been extended at £48 9*s.* 1¾*d.* instead of £27 2*s.* 1¼*d.*

PLATE LI. SEAL OF EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES
(*afterward Edward II of England*)

Another step in the right direction was taken by Edward III when he extended the benefits of the Statute Staple to the merchants of Wales. The staple towns were, of course, the great centres of trade in the fourteenth century. Nowhere save at these towns could the staple products of England and Wales be sold. Neither wool, wool-fells, leather, nor lead could be dealt with elsewhere than at the staple. Staple privileges were thus of great value. In 1332 staple towns were appointed at Shrewsbury and Caermarthen for Wales. Cardiff was, however, not granted the privilege, though it has sometimes been said that it was. In 1354 another step was taken. By the *Ordinacio Stapularum* it was provided that "Because we well perceive that merchants strangers do not come so commonly into . . . Wales for to merchandise as they do into England, we will of our special grace that it shall be lawful to the people of . . . Wales, which cannot utter their wools, leather, wool-fells, and lead in . . . Wales to all merchants strangers, to come with their said merchandises, after that they be customed and cocketed in . . . Wales, to any of our staples in England." The result of this enlightened treatment of Wales was greatly to increase the worldly wealth of the Principality, and although there were bad times occasionally—as in 1331, when there was such a famine of corn that a special licence was granted to David le Palmer and Hugh le Mareys of Bruggewater (Bridgwater) to import 500 quarters of corn into Wales, notwithstanding the fact that importation of corn had lately been forbidden—it is evident that the Welsh were settling down to a condition of tranquillity. There is no sign during the whole of the fourteenth century of any extensive system of repressive legislation against the Welsh such as suddenly meets us in the early years of Henry IV's reign.

### The Black Death

The tide of prosperity which had been slowly rising received a rude set-back by the dreadful scourge of 1349. The Black Death, so called from the black marks which are the sign of

the bubonic plague, had come from the East, following the trade routes. As early as 1347 it had devastated the Levant. Italy and France received the fatal visitor in the year following. By 1349 it was raging in eastern England, and had reached the west of England by the autumn of that year. In Scotland it was unknown until 1350, and an army had assembled to ravage the Border, now prostrated by the disease. The raid never took place. While yet assembled the blow fell, and the soldiers dwindled away plague-stricken to their homes and their graves.

In Wales the pestilence ravaged the country from end to end. Whole villages were wiped out, and there is evidence to show that the clergy and the monastic orders were especially attacked. Some authorities consider that half the population fell victims to the disease, and although this may perhaps be regarded as an exaggeration, it is probable that one-third of the clergy, the monks, and the peasants died of the plague. Churchyards were choked, plague-pits were filled. Clement VI took steps to enable the last sacrament to be administered by persons other than priests, special indulgences were granted, lay confessors were permitted.

The results of this frightful visitation were immense. The wealthy men, lords of land and magnates, escaped to a large extent. The labourers, however, were greatly reduced in number. Cattle wandered unattended; crops were left to rot in the fields; commodities fell as the demand fell, but soon afterward, although food-stuffs still remained cheap, luxuries vastly increased in price. Wages went up enormously.

As we know, the answer of the English Government was the Statute of Labourers and its various amendments. It was found, however, impossible, in practice, to get men to work on the old terms. The villein's position was immensely improved. For years the old services in kind, the duty of ploughing so many acres or sowing so much land, had been commuted for payment in money. Now, with increased wages, the labourer began to be free. No longer did dull poverty grind him down as in the past. He had some leisure. No

longer was it necessary to toil ceaselessly to keep his rude home together. With increased wealth, with increased leisure, he began to look around; he ceased to be an instrument of labour and became something of an intelligent being.

On the other hand, the monks had been terribly weakened by the plague. Not only were their numbers largely reduced, but their wealth was also decreased. Land dropped in value, and with it rents. One great result of this weakening of the monastic power was a wonderful quickening of religious thought. It may be that the years when men had looked on Death had caused this increase in religious fervour; it may be that the monks, who in many cases in the fourteenth century had fallen so far from the earlier and purer types, had acted as a check upon religious feeling. It is certain that after the Black Death Wales experienced a revival both in religion and in poetry.

### The Poets of the Fourteenth Century

So great was the increase in poetic feeling that the history of Wales during the latter half of this century may almost be said to be the history of its poets. They exercised a great influence. They were the enemies of the priests, but not of religion. Christianity is a great enough, a wide enough philosophy to embrace many creeds and classes of people. The poets who sang of love, love of nature and love of life—and love of woman—were not the Antichrists that the clergy would insist on regarding them as being. The quickening of thought which came from the singers woke man once more from the lethargy into which he had fallen. Some writers have even gone so far as to trace to the poets of this period the commencement of the Renaissance. Thus Heckethorn has said that "it appears reasonable to consider the troubadours as the originators of that vast conspiracy directed against the Church of Rome, the champions of a revolt which had not for its guide and object material interests and vulgar ambitions, but a religion and a polity of Love."

### Davydd ap Gwilym

The great troubadour of Wales was certainly Davydd ap Gwilym. Born near Llanbadarn Fawr, or it may be near Llandaff, in Glamorganshire, he came of gentle parents, and received an excellent education abroad, acquiring, among other accomplishments, a knowledge of Latin and Italian. On his return to his native country he acted as tutor to the daughter of Ivor Hael of Maesaleg. He seems to have played Abélard to her Héloïse. The result, however, was less unfortunate to him, though his lady-love was compelled to retire to a convent in Anglesey. This was not his only experience in light dalliance. He has, indeed, been likened to Petrarch, for throughout the remainder of his life we find him addressing odes to Morvydd, as Petrarch did to Laura. To this lady he wrote some 147 poems, and eventually his sweet singing induced her to elope with him. As a result of this escapade he was caught and imprisoned, but was later ransomed by the men of Glamorgan.

It will be observed that Davydd's life was by no means perfect, and it is not to the dishonour of the Church that the clergy were in frequent conflict with him. But that he was a man of noble mind, apart from the weaknesses already mentioned, cannot be disputed.

As a troubadour he is, of course, worthy of a high place in any literature. Nor did he limit himself to songs of love. Nature also shared his heart. When he sings of summer—

> Thou Summer! father of delight,
> With thy dense spray and thickets deep;
> Gemmed monarch, with thy rapturous light
> Rousing thy subject glens from sleep!
>
> And thus mid all thy radiant flowers,
> Thy thickening leaves and glossy bowers,
> The poet's task shall be to glean
> Roses and flowers that softly bloom
> (The jewels of the forest's gloom!),
> And trefoils wove in pavement green,
> With sad humility to grace
> His golden Ivor's resting-place [1]

[1] Referring to the custom of placing flowers on the graves of the dead.

—we forgive him his folly and wonder at the narrowness of the anchorite of Llanddewi Brevi, who, when speaking of the bards of whom Davydd ap Gwilym was a worthy example, wrote: "With all their might they serve the devil." It is, indeed, curious with what hatred the monk and the bard regarded one another throughout the greater part of the fourteenth century. The rivalry had, it is true, existed from early times, but it was only now that the two parties were in such violent opposition. Now the poets were accusing the priests of cloaking religion in a mourner's garb; of denying to man the right to rejoice in the beauty of nature; of chaining men's minds to a critical and narrow creed. The monks, humane Franciscan as well as Dominican, replied with bitterness that the bard's passion was for earthly things, for earthly beauties and for earthly joys. It was the old conflict between joyousness and austerity. But though it was old and unending, it is strange that it was in this period that it became so vocal and so bitter. It is stranger when we remember that it was Davydd ap Gwilym and no monk who wrote:

> On Sunday, sacred holiday!
> As, late at eve, I stayed to pray
> (By the bright lamps that light that shrine)
> To God, and to His orders nine,
> In yonder church, that, to my eyes,
> Appears a second Paradise. . . .

Davydd ap Gwilym, though the greatest of the fourteenth-century Welsh poets and the one who rightly won the title of chief bard of Glamorgan, was not the only singer who enriched Welsh literature about this time. Other notable names were those of Gruffydd Llwyd, chief bard to Owain Glyndwr; Ithel Ddû; Mabelâv ap Llywarch; Howel Ystoryn; Y Ystus Llwyd; Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, or 'Trahaearn the noted bard'; and, last and chiefest, Iolo Goch.

### Iolo Goch

This poet, whose real name was Edward Llwyd, was of noble birth, being lord of Llechryd and, according to Gruffydd

Hiraelliog, the son of the Countess of Lincoln. Although, as many think, much inferior to Davydd ap Gwilym, he was certainly a poet of distinction, and at the last of the "three Eisteddfods of the Renaissance" of Welsh literature, a meeting held under the patronage of Roger Mortimer, first Earl of March, and presided over by Davydd ap Gwilym, he was made a chaired bard.

Some writers have described him as Owain Glyndwr's family bard, but he was in truth the friend rather than the dependent of that great Welshman. Yet, although the equal of Owain in birth, that patriot's prowess as a fighter and genius as a leader of men caused the poet to look up to him as a master, so that we find him writing :

> My Lord supreme, of high descent,
> To minstrels most munificent,
> Can welcome still, nor deem it hard,
> A crooked, old, decrepid bard.

Most of the poems of Iolo that have come down to us are patriotic or devotional, but he has also given us an excellent descriptive piece recounting the manifold beauties of his friend's mansion at Sycharth and the hospitality to be found therein.

### Sir John Gower

There was another poet writing in another language who must not be forgotten. Sir John Gower, who flourished in the reign of Richard II, though a native of Gwyr, in South Wales, was among the first to show that English could be made the vehicle of poetry. His rhymes, such as,

> He taught her till she was certayne
> Of Harp, Citole, and of Kiote,
> With many a tewne, and many a note,

compare ill with the Welshmen's polished verses, but he helped to plant the tree which, tended by Chaucer, flourished so wonderfully under the Elizabethans.

### The Peasants

We have already touched upon the Black Death and seen how wages rose and rents fell. We have also seen how in some ways the position of the labourers was improved by that scourge—that is to say, in Wales. As late as Elizabeth's reign we find Parliament referring to the immense decrease in rents consequent on this plague, and it is evident that the peasants in many cases became small tenant farmers at very much reduced rents.

It is convenient here to consider what had happened to the land after the Statute of Rhuddlan. Before the Edwardian conquest we know that the Welsh held land by tribal rather than individual ownership. When Edward turned North Wales into a huge royal demesne portioned out by successive gifts to the Prince of Wales, or, failing such grants, remaining in the king, the principle of individual ownership was established. The old chiefs became tenants in fee-simple, holding by a form of tenure similar to gavelkind. As time went on they became very like lords of manors, with under-tenants holding by copyhold. With regard to the villeins the position was more difficult. They had for centuries occupied small plots of land or little farms in return for services rendered to the Welsh chiefs. Even before the Edwardian conquest and long before the Black Death the tendency had been for these services to be commuted for payments in money. The villeins or peasants had thus become for all practical purposes small tenant farmers paying a yearly or quarterly rent for their holding, sometimes in money, sometimes in kind, but comparatively and increasingly rarely in services. After the conquest a genuine attempt seems to have been made to keep the old system on substantially without alteration. The old payments were continued and tenants were not disturbed.

We have spoken of the peasants as being practically tenants at a rent—that is to say, leaseholders. They were, however, in rather a better position than this. In many cases they

and their ancestors had occupied the same holdings for many years, sometimes for centuries. They paid, it is true, a rent, but in many cases it was a small rent, almost a nominal one. Their tenure was regarded as more or less fixed. They had what we may perhaps describe as a perpetually renewable lease at a low rent.

Another change seems to have come with the Black Death. As Professor Tout says (speaking of England—the same holds for Wales): "Rents fell heavily. Landlords found that they could only retain their tenants by wholesale remissions. When farmers perished of the plague it was often impossible to find others to take up their farms. It was even harder for lords who farmed their own demesne, to provide themselves with the necessary labour. Hired labourers could not be obtained except at ruinous rates. It was injudicious to press for the strict performance of villein services, lest the villein should turn recalcitrant and leave his holding. The lord preferred to commute his villein's service into a small payment. On the whole the best solution of the difficulty was for him to abandon the ancient custom of farming his demesne through his bailiff, and to let out his lands on such rents as he could get to tenant farmers." The result was a great increase in the number of small holders, and a still further reduction of the rents payable. In some cases, in Wales, it would appear that the rents had dropped so that with the lessening of the value of money in the succeeding centuries the leasehold nature of the holding began to be forgotten, the nominal rents were unpaid, and the villeins began to regard themselves as freeholders, or, at worst, copyholders. This claim was eventually, in the time of Elizabeth, decided to be bad in law, and the villeins were then granted renewable occupation leases of twenty-one years at a fixed rental.

From what we have said it will be seen that the latter half of the fourteenth century was a time of liberation for the serf. The Golden Age for labour was, of course, prevented in England by the repressive statutes dealing with the labour question—statutes which finally resulted in the rebellion of 1381 In

Wales, however, it is not at all clear that this period did not see an improvement in the lot of the labourer.

It is, however, quite certain that, whether his status or financial position was improved or not, the years following the Death were years of grave discontent, both in England and Wales. It must not be imagined that discontent connotes grievances. To-day the position of the working classes, both from a financial and a social point of view, is better than it has been for centuries, but education has increased their needs more rapidly than wealth has made the fulfilment of those needs possible. The result has been a decade of unexampled discontent. It was, we believe, much the same at the end of the fourteenth century in Wales. The old serf, the slave attached to land, the villein bound down to rustic services, had gone; the peasant holding his land at a low rental, or tilling the soil at an adequate rate, had come. New means of earning money had arisen. Bowmen and pikemen, mercenaries in all capacities for service in the French wars, were eagerly sought after. Wages considerably in excess of those paid in the previous century were being demanded and given. But, comparative prosperity notwithstanding, Wales, like England, seethed with discontent. The Lollard taught the equality of man. John Ball in Essex, speaking for the villeins, could say: "How can the gentry show that they are greater lords than we?" Richard Rolle [1] had already asked:

> When Adam delf and Eve span, spir, if thou will spede,
> Whare was then the pride of man, that now marres his mede?

Wales was not backward in the Lollard movement. Toward the end of the century John Oldcastle, afterward Sir John, the Lollard martyr, was castellan of Kidwelly Castle. Walter Brute, one of the greatest of Wyclif's followers, was preaching the new faith in the marcher lands.

When dealing with the prevailing discontent we do not find the old chroniclers talking of the misery, but rather of the greediness of the poor. In truth it was neither. The oppressed

[1] Died 1349.

were beginning to break their bonds. Freedom to think, freedom from serfdom, more money, more leisure—these were the claims common to England and Wales. Meetings were held, unions of labourers formed. The wage-earner was for a time in a commanding position, and a semblance of general equality seemed almost within his reach. When the bubble burst, when it was at last perceived that men were not equal and that the toilers must still toil and the ignorant still listen to preachers who spoke a language they did not understand, when it was found that knowledge was still denied them—then the peasants rose. The rising was wisely timed. England was convulsed with a dynastic struggle which eventually placed Henry of Lancaster upon the throne. It was fortunate for Wales that at that time a man of very considerable ability was ready to come forward and turn what might have been a mere rising of labourers into a national movement which, on the whole, we believe, was for the benefit of Wales. That Owain Glyndwr was a national hero, then, is evident. Such a strong impression did he make on the minds of his countrymen that even to-day the majority of Welshmen would choose him as the greatest leader of the Welsh their country has ever produced.

# CHAPTER XXI

## OWAIN GLYNDWR

OWAIN AP GRUFFYDD, lord of Glyndyvrdwy,[1] or Glyndwr, was of princely blood, being descended on the paternal side from Bleddyn ap Cynvyn. Born about 1359—for we find him referred to as being twenty-seven years of age when he appeared as a witness in the famous Scrope and Grosvenor lawsuit in 1386—he was the son of a Welsh squire of respectable fortune. The major portion of his estates lay in the north around Sycharth, the family seat so eloquently described by Iolo Goch, but when he entered into his patrimony he also had the manors of Yscoed and Gwynionedd in South Wales.

The place of his birth cannot be fixed with certainty, but tradition has it that he was born at Trefgarn Owain. It is believed that he was educated at Oxford, the university to which, perhaps, the majority of Welshmen desiring to read at the older universities have at all times gone. It is certain that after completing his general education he read law at Westminster, and was, perhaps, called to the Bar. Later he became something of a courtier, and acted as squire to Arundel, according to Capgrave. He was thus by no means the rude, uncultivated leader of peasants that some of the older Saxon authorities would have us believe. Shakespeare rightly sums up the quality of his mind when he makes Mortimer say :

> In faith, he is a worthy gentleman,
> Exceedingly well read, and profited
> In strange concealments, valiant as a lion
> And wondrous affable, and as bountiful
> As mines of India.

[1] Pronounced in English ' Glendourdee.'

And again when he puts in Glyndwr's own mouth the words :

> I was trained up in the English Court,
> Where, being but young, I framed to the harp
> Many an English ditty lovely well.

Throughout Glyndwr's life some thought him possessed of magic power. Even his birth was supposed to have been signalled by strange occurrences, as we find him saying in *Henry IV* (Part I) :

> At my nativity
> The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
> Of burning cressets ; and at my birth
> The frame and huge foundation of the earth
> Shak'd like a coward.

Many of his later victories were, indeed, set down by the English to magic, and he was credited with the power of making himself invisible at will.

While yet a young man (in 1385) we find him serving in the Scottish campaign of Richard II, but shortly afterward he seems to have taken service with Henry of Lancaster. He was from an early period of his life an enemy of Lord Grey of Ruthin, one of his most powerful neighbours, and in 1401 he is supposed to have appealed to Parliament against that lord's encroachments on his land, but the date is an improbable one and there is no mention of the fact on the Rolls. It is not probable that he was on unfriendly terms either with Mortimer or Earl Warren. The latter had, indeed, been responsible for the return of the Glyndyvrdwy lands to the uncle of the two youths Llywelyn and Gruffydd, popularly supposed to have been drowned by their guardians, Warren and Mortimer. It was in consequence of this belated act of repentance that Owain eventually inherited that property.

The uncle above referred to, by name Gruffydd Vychan, was, of course, Owain's father, and upon his death Owain entered upon the patrimony and became a wealthy squire. He seems to have been, like most Welshmen, extremely hospitable, and his house, Sycharth, became noted as a meeting-place for bards, where the wandering minstrels were always sure to

PLATE LII. THE MOUND WHERE SYCHARTH STOOD

*Photo Lettsome & Sons, Llangollen*

find meat and drink in plenty and lodging suited to their quality.

Throughout his early years it is apparent that he was friendly with the English. We have already seen that he was a follower of Richard II, and later of Arundel and Henry of Lancaster. He was also connected by ties of blood with the English family of L'Estrange, of Knockin, near Oswestry, and had married Margaret, daughter of Sir David Hanmer, one of Richard's Justices of the King's Bench. Most of his many daughters married into noble or gentle English or marcher families. It was not, indeed, until he was over forty years of age that we find him in opposition to the English Government. It may be that the trouble with Lord Grey of Ruthin was the spark which fired the tinder. It may be that the disgrace he fell into with the English king in consequence of his failure to obey the summons to take part in the Scottish expedition of 1400—a disgrace which was not merited, since his enemy Lord Grey, who had been entrusted with the summons, failed to deliver it until too late—caused him to rebel. He certainly retaliated by plundering Grey's estates and putting to death some of his household. In our opinion, however, it was not until the passing of statute 2 Henry IV, c. 12, that Glyndwr's rebellion can be regarded as a national movement.

It is well known that before the final success of Henry Bolingbroke which resulted in his becoming Henry IV the Welsh as a nation were keen partisans of Richard II. It shows Glyndwr's early English sympathies that he is found on the side of Henry and the English popular party. In so acting he was flying in the face of the mass of Welsh opinion and was far from being a leader of the Welsh peasantry. His troubles with Lord Grey and Henry seem to have resulted in a change of views. He would, however, have been, we believe, quite impotent as a national leader unless there had been some great and new grievance which called for redress. At the time of his outburst he was a squire of moderate fortune and nothing more. Wales, however, was crying aloud for a leader, discontent among the peasants was rife, and matters

came to a head with the passing of the *Statutum de anno secundo*. This statute was the first of a series of measures intended to repress the Welsh people. It debarred Welshmen born in Wales or having parents born in Wales from purchasing land or tenements within the boroughs of Chester, Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Leominster, Hereford, Gloucester, Worcester, or other merchant towns. No such Welshman could henceforth be chosen citizen or burgess in any of these places. Welshmen dwelling there were required to find surety for good behaviour, and were forbidden to wear armour within the precinct of the said towns. The Act also contained, of course, strict clauses directed against Lollards preaching or teaching or writing books. These provisions were followed by others requiring the Lords Marchers to keep sufficient "stuffing and ward" in their castles and seigneuries; providing that no "whole Englishman" should henceforth be convicted at the suit of any Welshman within Wales; debarring Welshmen from purchasing lands anywhere in England.

In 1402 another measure was passed, this time directed against the bards who up and down Wales had been rousing their countrymen to resistance. By an ordinance passed in that year it was commanded that "no waster, rhymer, minstrel, nor vagabond be in any wise sustained in the land of Wales to make commorthies [1] or gathering upon the common people there." These provisions were ostensibly enacted "to eschew many diseases and mischief, which have happened before this time in the land of Wales" by reason of the aforesaid 'wasters,' etc., but it is clear that it was the bards' patriotic lays which were troubling Henry. This same year saw the enactment of many other laws against the Welsh. They were forbidden to hold meetings or councils; to bear armour; to have or keep or hold castles, fortresses, or houses defensive; to act as justice, chamberlain, chancellor, treasurer, sheriff, steward, constable of castle, receiver, escheator, coroner, chief forester, or in any other public office. Englishmen married to Welsh-

[1] A collection frequently made at marriages or on other occasions when many people were assembled.

women were likewise debarred from holding office, and the English were forbidden to import victuals or armour into Wales.

Of course, before most of these laws had been passed Wales was openly in arms against England. It is instructive to observe that the flame first burst forth in North and Mid Wales, and we agree with 'Owen Rhoscomyl' that in those districts the rising was probably more political than social. When the South joined in later on they were doubtless actuated by social rather than political reasons. They were mainly peasants and labourers who wished to better their lot as against the landowners, whether English or Welsh. They were Owain's 'starvelings.' But it was not to these that Owain's followers were limited. He must have had Wales solidly behind him for his depredations to have been tolerated by his own countrymen. It was not merely the social unrest which was responsible for the spread of the revolt, it was not merely the oppression of the seigneurial jurisdictions, it was certainly not Owain's private grievances against Lord Grey. Of the many causes which were at work we cannot ignore the Welsh sympathy for Richard and the repressive measures of Henry's early years. These may not have lit the fire, but they fanned the flames.

## Owain in Arms

It was in 1400 that Owain first took up arms. As we have said, his first steps were taken against Lord Grey. He recovered the lands of which he had been dispossessed. This was in the summer of that year. Lords Talbot and Grey marched against him, and though at first they succeeded in surprising him he escaped, raised a force, proclaimed himself Prince of Wales, and by the end of September had plundered and burnt to the ground Ruthin town while the fair was being held there.

Henry now deemed it necessary to march in person against Owain. He quickly penetrated as far as Anglesey, and plundered Llanvaes Convent, of the Franciscan order. Meanwhile Owain, realizing that he was not powerful enough to

cross swords with Henry, had retired to the hills of Eryri. Owain's rebellion was treated as a cause of forfeiture of his estate, and his lands were granted to John, Earl of Somerset —who, however, would have adventured his life had he attempted to take them.

Toward the end of the year Henry made an effort to gather to his standard all the Welsh who would make submission to his son Henry at Chester. Owain meanwhile was not idle. Though few Welshmen hurried to Chester, many Welshmen came from England—students from Oxford, and men of all classes from all parts of the country—to join the movement. The year 1401 was to some extent favourable for a successful rising. Henry was threatened by both France and the Scots. Feeling his weakness, Henry is found issuing pardons to the Welsh concerned in the later rising, Owain and certain other leaders alone being excepted. The insurrection, however, had gone too far to be checked so easily. By the summer Owain had gathered a small army around him on Mount Plinlimmon, from which vantage-ground he plundered the surrounding country. Welshpool was sacked and burnt, the abbey of Cwm Hir, in Radnorshire, was destroyed, and Radnor Castle taken, the whole garrison of sixty men being beheaded on the edge of the castle yard.

The Flemings of Pembrokeshire had also suffered. They replied by collecting 1500 men, with whom they succeeded in completely surrounding Owain's much less numerous force. Owain's men, however, knowing that they could expect no mercy, fought for their very lives. Hurling themselves against the weakest part of the encircling forces, they broke through the Flemings' ranks, and finally compelled them to retire, leaving 200 dead on the field.

Henry, seeing that Owain was becoming a menace again, now led his troops into Wales. After ravaging the country and destroying Ystrad Fflur Abbey he was compelled by famine to retire. It is in connexion with this campaign that Pennant tells the story of the Welshman who, as he says, " having made a rash promise to the king to betray Glyndwr,

refused afterward to perform it; and, eagerly stretching out his neck to the headsman, told him to strike, for that he had two sons at that time in the service of his chieftain; therefore would on no account reveal his councils." There were, however, traitors among the Welsh. In the year following we read of how, while Owain and his cousin Howel Sele, of Nannau, in Merionethshire, were walking together after a conference at which they had attempted to settle their grievances, Owain, seeing a doe feeding, pointed it out to Howel, who was a splendid archer. Howel, bending his bow and pretending to take aim at the doe, suddenly turned upon Owain and shot the arrow straight at his breast. The traitorous deed was, however, ineffective. Owain was protected by a coat of mail worn beneath his clothes. What happened to Howel no man knows, but four decades later the skeleton of a man of about his size was found not far from the spot in the hollow of a mighty oak.

It was some time before this attempt on Owain's life by his kinsman that Lord Grey had raised an army against Owain. A battle was fought at Vyrnwy, or, according to some, at Ruthin. The result was the defeat and capture of Grey. He was eventually ransomed by the payment of 6000 marks, and appears to have been forced into a marriage with Owain's daughter, Jane.

Glyndwr's next success was against Sir Edmund Mortimer, over whom he gained a victory in the June of 1402. Owain was now free to ravage Herefordshire and South Wales. During these raids the lands of Edmund's young nephew, Edward Mortimer, Earl of March, suffered greatly. At last Edmund was forced to collect another army in order to attempt to lay Owain by the heels. The forces met at Bryn-glas, and the Welsh leader was again victorious. Well might Gruffydd Llwyd, Owain's chief bard, sing:

Cambria's princely eagle, hail!
Of Gruffydd Vychan's noble blood!
Thy high renown shall never fail,
Owain Glyndwr, great and good.

It was after this victory that, according to Thomas de Walsingham and Holinshed, the mutilations were practised by Welshwomen of which Shakespeare speaks. There is probably no truth in these stories, but of the importance of the battle itself there is no doubt. Edmund Mortimer was captured, and the first step taken toward that alliance which eventually proved so dangerous to Henry. The prestige which he won in this engagement was also of great service to the Welsh leader, and his countrymen began to rally round his banner in ever-increasing numbers.

Meanwhile Henry had been collecting a strong force preparatory to launching an attack intended to crush Glyndwr once and finally. Writs had already been issued requiring the lieutenants of counties to assemble their forces and meet the king at Lichfield on July 7. Eventually the plans were slightly altered, and the king's forces were assembled at Chester, Shrewsbury, and Hereford by the end of August. While these ponderous preparations were being made Owain swept down upon Glamorganshire. Cardiff and Abergavenny were burnt. The archdeaconry of Llandaff was destroyed and the country ravaged. When at last the tripartite army under Henry, Henry of Monmouth—then but a boy—and the Earl of Arundel was ready to take the field, Owain replied by retiring to the mountain fastnesses, driving before him the cattle of the plains. The English, hampered by evil weather, found themselves in a desert. The crops had failed, storms of rain beat down upon the invading army, the inhabitants had fled and meat was unprocurable. Henry retreated, having accomplished nothing. Thus could Shakespeare say, in the person of Glyndwr :

> Three times hath Henry Bolingbroke made head
> Against my power ; thrice from the banks of Wye
> And sandy-bottom'd Severn have I sent him
> Bootless home and weather-beaten back.

So humbled were the English that the campaign is treated by the old annalists as having failed because Owain had magic powers. But it was no magic. Time after time throughout

the history of Wales have armies of invasion been beaten on the bleak hillsides of the Berwyns and of Eryri by weather, bogs, and hunger. So far Owain had played a game in which many a Welsh chieftain had taken a hand in the years gone by. It is Glyndwr's next action which has given him an imposing place in English as well as in Welsh history.

### The Alliance

While this affair had been in progress the Earl of Northumberland had succeeded in defeating the Scots at Homildon Hill. At this time, of course, the Percies were Henry's staunchest supporters. Trouble arose, however, over the captives whom Northumberland had taken, and for this and other causes the Percies became dissatisfied. At the same time Edmund Mortimer had been left by Henry a prisoner in Owain's hands and no serious attempt had been made to procure his release. The Mortimers had other causes for disloyalty. Henry's title to the throne was largely based on conquest, and so far as birth was concerned his claims were inferior to those of the young Earl of March, Edmund Mortimer's nephew.

The result of these defections was to throw Percy, Mortimer, and Glyndwr into a confederacy, to which moral support and a promise of active aid was rendered by the Douglas, whom Percy had lately liberated. Glyndwr had been careful throughout the time of Mortimer's captivity to treat his prisoner with marked respect. It is not improbable that Owain perceived that such a captive might prove a powerful lever in the case of real necessity. There was thus no personal enmity in the way of a unification of the forces of the two leaders.

The three plotters met, we are informed, "at the house of Dafydd Daron, or of Aberdarvon, Dean of Bangor, son of Evan ap Dafydd ap Gruffydd, descended from Cenadoc ap Jestyn, a Prince of Wales." The arrangement was that the dragon, the lion, and the wolf [1] were to partition England and Wales into three portions, each retaining a third.

[1] That is, Owain, Percy, and Mortimer respectively. See as to this meeting, however, Wylie, *History of England under Henry IV*, vol. i, p. 354.

Glyndwr was now at the highest point in his career. We find him keeping a regular court in Wales, possessing his own chancery, seal, and courts of law. We even read of his calling a Parliament of the de Montfort type to meet at Machynlleth,

Owain's Great Seal

Owain's Privy Seal

From *Archæologia*, vol. xxv. By permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

and he was also formally crowned Prince of Wales. It was at this stage that he narrowly escaped assassination at the hands of his brother-in-law, David Gam. The attempt was not fatal either to the attacked or the attacker. Gam was merely imprisoned, and many years afterward he is found fighting at the battle of Agincourt.

The year 1403 was mainly important, of course, for the

battle of Shrewsbury, at which Harry Hotspur was slain and Henry succeeded in destroying the hopes and plans of the confederates. The movements of this year have been very differently described by different authorities. The established Saxon view is that the *débâcle* of Shrewsbury was caused to a great extent by Glyndwr's liking for destructive warfare—a trait which kept him ravaging South Wales too long, so that he was unable to form a juncture with Percy's forces at Shrewsbury, and arrived too late to support his ally, being consequently forced to look passively on at the defeat of Hotspur's army and the destruction of his greater ambitions. Within recent years, however, an extremely instructive addition has been made to the theories relating to this engagement by a learned author who chooses to be known under the pen-name of 'Owen Rhoscomyl.' If we accept the suggestions thrown out by this writer it would seem that the real rendezvous of the allies was fixed in the Mortimer country at Ludlow—which was, of course, the seat of the Mortimers' power. Our authority adds: "From this place they were to march eastward into England to attack Henry with a view to placing the crown upon the head of the child Earl of March."

It is clear that, for this juncture to be safely effected, it was desirable for Glyndwr to make the country behind as safe as possible. It would have been madness to have withdrawn his troops from Wales in an easterly direction if he had left behind him all the retainers and men-at-arms of his enemies the marcher lords, ready and able to fall upon his now defenceless possessions. He would have had no safe base upon which to fall in the event of a temporary check or defeat.

In consequence of such considerations it does seem at least probable that Owain had a definite politic purpose in his harrying of South Wales. While Hotspur was hurrying down to Cheshire Owain was carrying fire and sword throughout the south. He had not, however, been forgetful of his ally. Many of his Welsh followers had been directed to join Hotspur's forces in Cheshire. As a result of these and other

additions to his ranks, Hotspur, who was ever a better man in the battlefield than in the council-chamber, seems to have determined to accomplish the overthrow of Henry single-handed. He certainly struck out east, completely off the line of march he should have taken had it been his purpose to join his allies. It was not, indeed, until he found that the men of the Midlands were not hurrying to his standard like the men of Cheshire that he decided to attempt the juncture originally planned. Now, however, it was too late.

All this, of course, had happened without the knowledge either of Mortimer or of Owain. The latter, meanwhile, had turned back from ravaging the south. Having hurried north to Ludlow in order to effect the meeting as arranged, it was then that he must have heard of Hotspur's change of plans and of his retreat on Shrewsbury. The Welsh leader, instantly perceiving that if Hotspur were caught by Henry before the allies had joined forces the whole campaign would end in disastrous defeat, hurried his men up north by forced marches. Delayed as he must have been by the weather—for it had been very stormy and wet and the floods were out—he arrived too late to save Hotspur.

So far we have followed 'Owen Rhoscomyl's' view of Glyndwr's action. That Owain probably had a reason, and a politic reason, for his harrying of the South Wales marcher lands is probable; that Hotspur turned east when, to effect an immediate juncture, he should have turned west, that Hotspur gained many more adherents in Cheshire than in the Midland counties, is known. It is not, however, certain that Ludlow was to be the meeting-place, though it is a very probable and convenient centre for operations. Again, it is not very clear why Glyndwr took so long in marching from South to North Wales. Accepting 'Owen Rhoscomyl's' statement that "Owain turned back from St. Clear's not earlier than July 12," we find that the Welsh leader took some eleven days to reach Shrewsbury. The distance is not great, and even assuming that there was trouble with the floods, this seems far too long a time. Owain, of course,

may have been relying on meeting his ally at Ludlow, but we must assume that the two forces were keeping in touch with one another to some extent. If we assume that Owain was quite ignorant of Hotspur's movements and relied on the Ludlow meeting, then indeed he cannot be blamed for the failure to meet. Hotspur must be adjudged guilty of that blunder.

There is another and more serious difficulty, however. Glyndwr was at Oswestry, which is considerably to the north of Shrewsbury, while the battle was being fought between Shrewsbury and Oswestry. Even if we admit that Glyndwr was so circumstanced that it was impossible for him to aid his ally, it is extremely difficult to see why he did not attack Henry after the battle. His followers, if joined to the remnant of the northern army, were twice as numerous as Henry's entire force. Henry's men were exhausted by a fierce and bloody engagement; Mortimer's army was untouched; Northumberland was hurrying southward by forced marches to the support of the allies.[1] Everything seems to have pointed to the necessity for instant action. The scattered armies of the allies might have been combined and flung against the king. But Owain failed to act. It was the great blunder of his life and the turning-point of his career. Henceonward his star was on the decline, until at last it set in gloom as deep as ever enclouded the last days of a brave man's life.

After the defeat at Shrewsbury Glyndwr seems to have done little to further the plot to place young Mortimer on the throne. He returned once more to his marauding attacks.

We must return, however, for a moment to the consideration of Owain's earlier South Wales campaign. In the beginning of 1403 the young Henry of Monmouth was made Lieutenant of Wales, and although but fifteen years of age at the time, he quickly showed of what mettle he was made by burning Sycharth and ravaging the territory around Owain's family demesne. Owain more than retaliated by a merciless devastation of South Wales. The keepers of castles are found writing in great haste to the king for immediate aid. Thus

[1] He was turned back, however, by Westmorland.

we have the constable of Dynevor sending the following letter "in haste and in dread":

"Dure frende i do zow to wetyn that Oweyn Glyndour Henri Don, Res Duy, Res ap Gr. ap Llewelyn, Res Gethin, han ywon the town of Kermerdyn, and Wygmor constable of the Castell hadd yzeld op the Castell of Kermerdyn to Oweyn; and han ybrend the Town, and yslay of men of town mor than l. men; and thei budd yn [be in] purpos to Kedweli; and a Seche [siege] ys y ordeynyd at the Castell that i kepe, and that ys gret peril for me, and al that buth wydde ine; for thai han y mad har [their] avow that thei well al gat haue owss [us] dede thryn. Wher for I prei zow that ze nul not bugil ous, that ze send to ous warning wyth yn schort time whether schull we have eny help or no; and bot ther bn help comig that we have an answer, that we may come bi nizt and stell away to Brechnoc; cause that we faylyth vitels and men, and namlich men. Also Jenkyn ap Ll. hath y zeld op the Castell of Emlyn wyth free wyll; and al so William Gwyn, Thomas ap David ap Gruff' and moni gentils been yn person wyth Oweyn. Warning erof I prei that ze send me bi the berer of thus letter. Farydd well yn the nam of the Trinite. Y wryt at Dynevor, yn hast and yn dred, yn the fest of Seint Thomas the Martir.

"JANKYN HANARD,
"*Constable de Dynevour.*"

Many similar appeals from castellans and constables of castles for help against the dreaded Glyndwr could be quoted. To give but one more instance, we find William Venables and Roger Brescy writing to the king on the eve of the second assault of Caernarvon Castle by Owain Glyndwr and the French.[1] After stating that they send this letter by a woman

[1] The text of this letter is as follows:
"Trespuissant et tresredoute Seigneur liege, nous nous recommandons a votre tressouvereigne Seigneur oue toutz maneres honeres et reverences. Et pleise a votre roial Magestee entendre que Robert Parys le puisne Conestable du Chastell de Caernarvan nous ad certifee per un femme, a cause qil navoit homme ascun qi osa venir, ne homme ne femme null ose ascun

PLATE LIII. 'GLYNDWR'S PRISON,' CARROG

*Photo Lettsome & Sons, Llangollen*

because no man dare bear it for fear of Owain Glyndwr and his men, the letter proceeds to relate that Owain is preparing with the aid of the French to attack Caernarvon Castle with engines, sows (similar to the Roman *vinea*), and ladders of great length, that the garrison is too small to withstand the attack, many having been lost in previous struggles or by disease, and pleads for immediate aid.

The French who are referred to in this last letter were Owain's French allies, who began to join him in 1404, and consequently this letter does not belong to the 1403 campaign. It is very typical, however, of the state of terror which Owain's presence frequently inspired. As we have said, the French did not commence to send aid to Owain until 1404. There is reason to believe that about this time there was a well-developed plan in existence for the invasion of England by France. A league with France was signed by Owain's ambassadors, John Hanmer and Griffith Yonge, in Paris on June 14, 1404. It was not ratified by Owain, however, until January 1405. About the same time Owain had obtained the support of the Pope, and Trevor, Bishop of St. Asaph, seems to have thought that Owain's bid for power would prove successful, for he is found revolting from Henry and joining the forces of the Welsh leader.

The French, meanwhile, had not been inactive. A fleet of

lettre porter pour les rebelles Gales qe Oweyn de Glyndour ouesque les Fraunceys et tout son autre poair se taillent d'assailler les Ville et Chastell de Caernarvan, et a commencer le jour de la fesance dicestes ovec esgynes, sowes, et laddres de tresgrand longure, et ne sont mie deinz mesmes les Ville et Chastell en tout outre xxviij. hommes defensibles, q'est trop petit force, qar y sont xj. de les meillors hommes qestoient la dedeinz al darrein assege illeoques fait ore mortz, ascuns des plaies qils avoient a temps d'assaut a eux fait, et ascuns de pestilence, siq les ditz Chastell et Ville sont en grand peril sicome le portor dicestes vous savera enformer par bouche, a qi pleise a votre hautesse doner ferme foi et credence, qar il sciet vous enformer de tout la veritee. Et luy toutpouissant Dieux vous ottrois, notre tresredoute Seigneur liege, prosperitee et bon exploit entres touz voz affairs. Et pleise a votre hautesse regarder un lettre enclos dedeinz cestes quele Reignald de Baildon un des Gardeins de la Ville de Conewey nous envoia huy ce jour, touchant lestat de votre Seignorie de Northgales. Escr. a Cestre la xvj. jour de Januer.

" Voz poueres lieges,

" WILLIAM VENABLES DE KYNDERTON AND ROG. BRESCY."

considerable size had set sail, intending to join forces with Owain, but it got no farther than the Isle of Wight, and for the moment French aid had to be dispensed with.

Owain, nothing daunted by this reverse to his allies, was successful in inflicting a severe loss upon the English. Richard Beauchamp had attacked and defeated the Welsh leader, and the English were in high glee at the rare achievement. Owain, however, gathering his forces together, hurried after the victors and flung himself against them with disastrous results to his enemies. This victory was followed up by the capture of Harlech and Aberystwyth Castles.

## Owain's Decline

The year 1405 was a black one for Glyndwr. It had opened with an abortive attempt on the part of Constance Lady Despenser, a sister of the Duke of York, to obtain the escape of the young Earl of March and his brother. A locksmith was bribed, keys were made, the young prisoners were freed, and their fair rescuer hurried them north and west, hoping for asylum in Glyndwr's mountain retreats. The fugitives, however, were overtaken, Lady Despenser and her charges were imprisoned, the locksmith lost his hands.

The next misfortune happened in March, when 8000 of Glyndwr's followers were overwhelmed by Sir Gilbert Talbot, Sir William Newport, and Sir John Greindre in South Wales, in that engagement an account of which is preserved to us in the very admirable letter from Henry of Monmouth to his royal father[1] now preserved in the British Museum and printed in Sir John Ellis' second series of *Original Letters*. The loss to Owain in this battle was considerable, some 800–1000 of his men fell, and his prestige received a severe check. Glyndwr attempted to remedy the defeat by sending his son

[1] Henry of Monmouth is generally credited with having spent a boisterous, if not an actually vicious, youth. His letters to his father show, however, that he was not the light character some would have us believe. Mr. Solly Flood has, indeed, clearly established that the young Henry was by no means the foolish companion of such men as Falstaff.

with another army to retrieve his failing fortune. On March 15 the battle at Mynydd y Pwll Melyn, in Brecknockshire, was fought. Again the Welsh were defeated. Fifteen hundred men were captured or slain. Owain's son was one of the captives and his brother Tewdwr one of the dead. For a time the Welsh were paralysed, for it was feared that Glyndwr himself had fallen. The mistake arose through Tewdwr's remarkable resemblance to him. It was not, indeed, until some one recognized that the mole which Owain had over one eye was missing on the face of the dead man that their worst fears were allayed. Even as it was, however, the reverse was a serious one, and according to Holinshed the position of Owain was rendered yet more difficult by another repulse in May. Whether this engagement was ever fought is, indeed, doubted by Pennant, but it is clear that Owain's fortunes were declining, for Glamorganshire submitted to Henry, and Glyndwr himself is found as a fugitive living in caves and desert places. A cavern by the sea near Llangelyniu for long bore the name of Ogof Owain, for tradition has it that here Ednyfed ap Aaron of the tribe of Ednowain ap Bradwen supported his leader, Glyndwr, during this evil time.

It was during this period of small happenings that Charles VI of France sent substantial aid to his Welsh ally. A force of 800 men-at-arms, 600 cross-bowmen, and 1200 foot-soldiers set sail, under the command of Aubert de Hangest, Sire de Hugueville, and landed at Milford Haven. The invaders marched on Caermarthen, which capitulated, laid unsuccessful siege to Haverfordwest, and eventually joined forces with Glyndwr at Tenby. The combined army now numbered not less than 10,000 men, and consequently it was determined to attack the English border counties. Worcester was eventually reached after a hurried march through Glamorganshire, and its outlying parts were fired. In the meantime the French fleet had been attacked and many ships destroyed, and an auxiliary fleet bringing supplies scattered.

The English king now determined to march against the Welsh-French combination in person. The two armies met

near Woodbury Hill, not far from Worcester. No fighting took place, though the opposing forces were facing one another for eight days. The French commander had taken up a strong position and refused to be drawn. Henry, on the other hand, contented himself with cutting off food supplies, sending a few of his more ardent knights to wage personal combat with cavaliers from the other side so that the French might not become impatient. These tactics were successful. De Hugueville found his position untenable and beat a retreat under cover of night into Wales. Henry started in pursuit, but found progress through the deserted and barren country impossible. He retired with the loss of much baggage.

The French seem to have decided to render no further aid to Glyndwr, and their forces set sail for France in the spring of 1406. Glyndwr was now reduced to the position of a mere marauder. He had not, however, given up all his high ambitions. In a letter to Charles VI he is still found to be aiming at the restoration of Welsh independence; and it is evident that he still hoped to separate the Welsh from the English Church, and to establish two Welsh universities in which the progressive spirit which had already infused new life into the literature of the country could find expression and direction.

Owain Glyndwr, though about to decline into a hapless condition, was still the man of affairs. It is probable that he was in touch with Scotland as well as with France. The Scotch power had, however, been broken and that alliance was useless to him. Glyndwr was not the man to surrender his cherished ambitions without a struggle. He was still in the prime of life, though the seal which has been preserved to us shows him as a man well advanced in years; he was as yet not completely deserted by his French allies, who sent him some slight support in this present year. The greatest weakness of his position lay, however, in the nature of the rising. He had been the leader of the peasants. His followers were not mercenaries. The pay they got was not in money, but by way of redress of grievances and revenge. They must have lived on plunder and the ravaging of the marcher lands. Such

a rising naturally must have been short-lived. Glyndwr had already succeeded in keeping the support of his followers for four years. During that time the marcher lords had received a rude lesson and had been shown that oppression was a dangerous weapon. The peasants, on the other hand, had tired of a warfare which now had little reason in it so far as they could see. Owain's great schemes for a new, rejuvenated Wales, free as to territory, religion, and education, were beyond them. They looked to their immediate needs and immediate wants and immediate sufferings; and, so looking, deserted their leader. Glamorganshire had already submitted to the king in 1405. Early in 1406 the people of Ystrad Tywi passed over from the Welsh side. In the north and in Anglesey Owain was still able to support some show of princely power, but the royal arm was beginning to reach even to Anglesey.

Llanbedr and Harlech were not lost to him until 1409, but the Earl of Northumberland, who had earlier sought refuge with Glyndwr, realized that the Welsh leader was too weak to protect him and left Wales. Owain, for his part, was driven to take refuge in the mountains, from whence he levied a guerrilla warfare upon the surrounding lands. The year 1408 was quite uneventful, but in 1409 attacks of some magnitude were made on the marches. In these raids Edward de Charlton of Powys suffered most severely. It was found sufficient, however, to issue orders calling upon the greater landowners to garrison their castles and to collect their forces. It was during one of these raids—this time directed against Shropshire—that Owain lost two of his most faithful lieutenants in the persons of Rhys Ddu and Philip Scudamore, who were caught by the English. Both were sent to the Tower and executed, Rhys being drawn on a hurdle to Tyburn.

In the autumn of this year Owain was again active. So great was the loss suffered by the marchers that some entered into a truce with the Welsh leader. It was not, however, countenanced by the English Government, and the marchers were peremptorily commanded to renew the struggle. This they did successfully, so that Glyndwr was driven once more

to the hills. Owain now experienced a further loss of supporters. His followers gradually dwindled, and although he was still a force to be reckoned with, he was unable to trouble his enemies during the years following. Pardons had been readily granted by Henry of Monmouth to the Welsh rebels around Coleshill, and the country was rapidly settling down once more into a condition of tranquillity.

The later years of Owain's life are wrapped in obscurity. In 1413 Henry IV had been succeeded by his son Henry of Monmouth. At this time Glyndwr had been reduced to the condition of a wanderer among the mountains of the north. His followers had largely deserted him, won over by the promises of pardon held out to them by Hugh Huls, or Holes, Baron of the Exchequer, and Chief Justice Hankford, who had been sent by Henry V to North Wales to inquire into the conduct and pardon of rebels who were prepared to submit and pay an appropriate fine in lieu of escheat. By the end of that year the country was quiet, and such confidence had Henry in the settled state of Wales that we find a Welshman, Rhys ap Thomas, appointed Steward of Cardigan. Castles were rebuilt and the country returned to a state of peace. As Mr. Wylie has said in his work on Henry V : [1] " The general pacification of the country is strongly evidenced by the employment of many Welshmen in positions of trust under the English Government, and it is significant to find many Welsh squires as well as 500 archers from South Wales with genuine Welsh names fighting side by side with Englishmen at Agincourt, though there is also evidence that some Welsh gentlemen fought with the French on the opposite side.

" It may be argued that this is only a proof of Welsh adaptability ; and, indeed, it is expressly recorded by a compatriot that when they saw their cause was lost they took to living like Englishmen. They tilled the ground, moved into towns, made money and kept it, rode in hauberks, wore shoes, slept under blankets, and tried to pass as English rather than as Welsh. Thus money broke them down, and the fear of losing

[1] The first volume, published 1914.

what they had; for it is only the haveless that can afford to be dreadless, and only the empty wayfarer that can whistle in the face of the robber."

Owain's career was now, indeed, nearly at an end. Roaming about the Berwyns, deserted by all save a few faithful followers, he was told by the abbot of Valle Crucis Abbey, who met him one day wandering forlornly among the scenes of his youth, near the ruins of Sycharth, that he had risen a century too soon. The prophecy that a Welshman would one day sit on the throne of England evidently was not to apply to him. He who had once been the hero of his country was now reduced to wearing the clothes of a labourer, so that with sickle in hand he might escape recognition and capture. Poor and almost friendless, he had to look back on a life full of noble purpose which yet had failed to reach the goal so long attempted. In the struggle he had lost all save honour. His lands had gone, his home, one time the centre of hospitality, was a burnt-out ruin. All his sons had been captured or had perished, save only Maredudd, who now shared his downfall. It may be that his daughters were still living, but one of them, Catherine, the widow of Edmund Mortimer, together with her three little daughters, had been captured when Harlech fell in 1409. All of these died in London before 1414, and were buried in St. Swithin's Church, in Candlewick Street.

But if Owain had lost his lands, his children, and his followers, he had not lost all his former spirit, for though Gilbert Talbot was authorized to negotiate a pardon with him as late as 1415, the old hero, who had thought to make of his people a free and enlightened nation, refused to come to terms. He died soon afterward, worn out with want and exposure. He was buried at night, and no one knows where his grave is.

Glyndwr was dead. Whether his poor corpse lay in the earth at Bangor or at Monnington or at Kenchurch, or whether it was covered by leaves in the woods of Glamorganshire, he was dead, and no longer could men look to him as a national champion who could lead them to freedom. But though

Glyndwr was dead his deeds still lived. He had befriended the poor and the peasants. He had won for them what, leaderless, they would never have gained. He had struggled hard to give his country freedom and the priceless gift of learning. He had shown himself a single-hearted patriot. He had sacrificed his fortune, his children, his life in the struggle. His reward and his only reward is a place in the hearts of Welshmen unoccupied by any other name in Welsh history. We can truly say with Gruffydd Llwyd, though five centuries have passed since he wrote :

Thy high renown shall never fail,
Owain Glyndwr.

# CHAPTER XXII

## WALES AND ENGLAND UNITED

AT the beginning of the period of which we are now treating the Welsh had but lately put down their arms, which for years, under the leadership of Glyndwr, they had raised against England. Glyndwr, actuated by the highest motives, had pursued the policy of Owain of France, had allied himself to the French king, and had looked to French aid to release him and his country from chains forged by England. At the end of the period we find Welshmen fighting bravely by the side of England and France in the battlefields of Belgium. So spins the whirligig of Time. From the death of Owain Glyndwr to the great European War there stretch the movements of centuries. In those years Welshmen have done famous deeds the world over. They have fought for King Harry of England against France—many a Welshman laid down his life on the field of Agincourt; their bowmen went far to make us the premier fighting race in Europe in the early fifteenth century. Welshmen fought on both sides in the Wars of the Roses. A dynastic struggle headed by the Mortimers, and at the end, on the other side, by the Tudors, could hardly fail to interest and excite the Principality. As every Welshman knows, Edward IV, the leader of the Yorkists, was a Mortimer, and was descended from Llywelyn the Great through that Gwladys who married Ralph Mortimer. Henry VII, on the other hand, was a descendant of Owen Tudor of Anglesey. Again, with Welsh Henry and the Tudors came those changes which saw the fall of an aristocracy and the rise of a monarchy wisely tolerating and apparently bending before the people in

their Parliament assembled. This era it was which saw the Rule of Law beginning to be firmly established. For Wales it saw the seigneurial jurisdictions crushed; it saw the Council of the Marches developed and strengthened. Under Bishop Lee it saw lawlessness ruthlessly put down; under the firm hand of Thomas Cromwell it saw disorder checked and trade encouraged. Toward the end of the Tudor period the world saw the eyes of north-western Europe turning from Rome. The Renaissance, bringing to man the fruits of knowledge, caused him to cast away the husks of creed. Again Wales took her part. For many reasons the waves of this mighty movement had been late in reaching her shore, and Wales remained Catholic for years after England had turned Protestant; but when the Bible was translated into Welsh by such men as Salesbury and Bishop Morgan and had been distributed widely by the munificence of Myddleton the Puritan spirit began to gather in force, and although it developed too late to prevent Wales attaching herself in the main to the Royalist party in the great struggle of the Civil War, it grew in time into that austere Nonconformity which in the eighteenth century did much to cleanse Wales of serious abuses, and certainly was effective in preserving the Welsh language from the fate which has overtaken Old Cornish.

When we remember that to all these important movements, events, and facts we must add the presence in English history of the names of many great Welshmen; when we remember that this period saw the political and *de facto* union of England and Wales, the growth of Welsh representation in Parliament —and at least one English Premier, in the person of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, who sat for Radnor for twenty years, is to be numbered among the Welsh members—we must agree that this long period of history cannot be treated adequately or even adumbrated in one chapter. It is, indeed, because from, at latest, the Act of Union of 1535 Wales merges more and more in England and Welsh history becomes inextricably intermingled with English history that we have

dared to dismiss these long and important years in a few pages of this book.

### War and Lawlessness

The hundred and twenty years which separate the death of Glyndwr from the Act of Union were sad years for Wales. Bereft of their leaders, the people became a nation of peasants. Literature declined and wore a rougher garb, the nation was poor and prostrate before the lords marchers, though, it is true, the lessons of the peasants' revolt under Glyndwr had beneficial results for the tiller of the soil. Lawlessness was rampant, outlawry and the harbouring of thieves and murderers were common. On the other hand, in the towns trade increased and Welshmen began to grow rich. The seigneurial jurisdictions had, however, great power and gave rise to grave abuses. Thousands of Welshmen, despairing of a free life in their native country, turned eagerly to the French wars to enable them to earn liberty and honour and a fair wage as the price of their lives. It is not, however, until the Wars of the Roses that Wales is again found taking an important part in any great national movement.

As Miss Skeel has told us, "During the Wars of the Roses the power of the rival claimants to the throne lay in Wales and the marches. From the great Mortimer estates, whose centre was Ludlow, the Duke of York drew his armies, while the west of Wales, from Pembroke to Anglesey, was strongly Lancastrian. For a generation the dreary dynastic struggle continued, reducing divided Wales to utter misery, till at last the Welshman Henry Tudor defeated the heir of the Mortimers on Bosworth Field." It is not our purpose to inflict upon the reader an account of the many and bloody battles which were fought in the course of this great civil war, and which, by reducing the power and number of the old nobility, paved the way for Tudor greatness and the Rule of Law. Since, however, the appearance of Henry Tudor on the English throne had a considerable effect on Welsh history, we will trace out the steps which sent him an exile to France and brought him

back through Wales and supported by Welshmen to wear the crown taken from the dead Richard at Bosworth.

Henry VII was the son of Edmund, Earl of Richmond, and grandson of Owen Tudor, who, though but a private gentleman of Anglesey, was of princely descent and had married Henry V's widow, Catherine of France. Edmund had also made an important alliance, having married Margaret Beaufort, heiress of John of Gaunt. Edmund died while the child Henry was yet an infant, leaving him the ward of his uncle, Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke. Owen Tudor was taken and beheaded after the Lancastrian defeat at Mortimer's Cross, and the young Henry Tudor was captured by Herbert after the fall of Harlech Castle, a stronghold which held out last of all the Lancastrian castles. It is supposed that during this siege the Welsh national song, "The March of the Men of Harlech," was composed.

The tide turned in the year following (1469), when Herbert was beheaded after Edgecote and Jasper Tudor rescued his ward from Herbert's castle of Raglan. The child Henry was as yet but second among the hopes of the Lancastrians, but when Prince Edward was murdered at Tewkesbury Henry became heir to the Red Rose cause. The defeat at Tewkesbury made it necessary for him to seek safety abroad, and so we find him smuggled by Jasper from Pembroke, to be carried by ill winds to Brittany.

It was not until some fourteen years later that the youthful claimant with the still faithful Jasper sailed from Harfleur for Wales again. They landed on the coast of Pembrokeshire. Their reception was by no means cheering. Herbert hung back, and Rhys ap Thomas for the moment appeared more ready to bargain than to aid. Finally, however, this wealthy leader of the South Wales peoples extracted sufficient promises from Henry and definitely threw in his lot with the Tudors. Richard Gruffydd also came forward, and as Henry passed through Machynlleth, Newtown, and Welshpool to Shrewsbury his following gradually increased. Shrewsbury itself, after some hesitation, threw open its gates. When

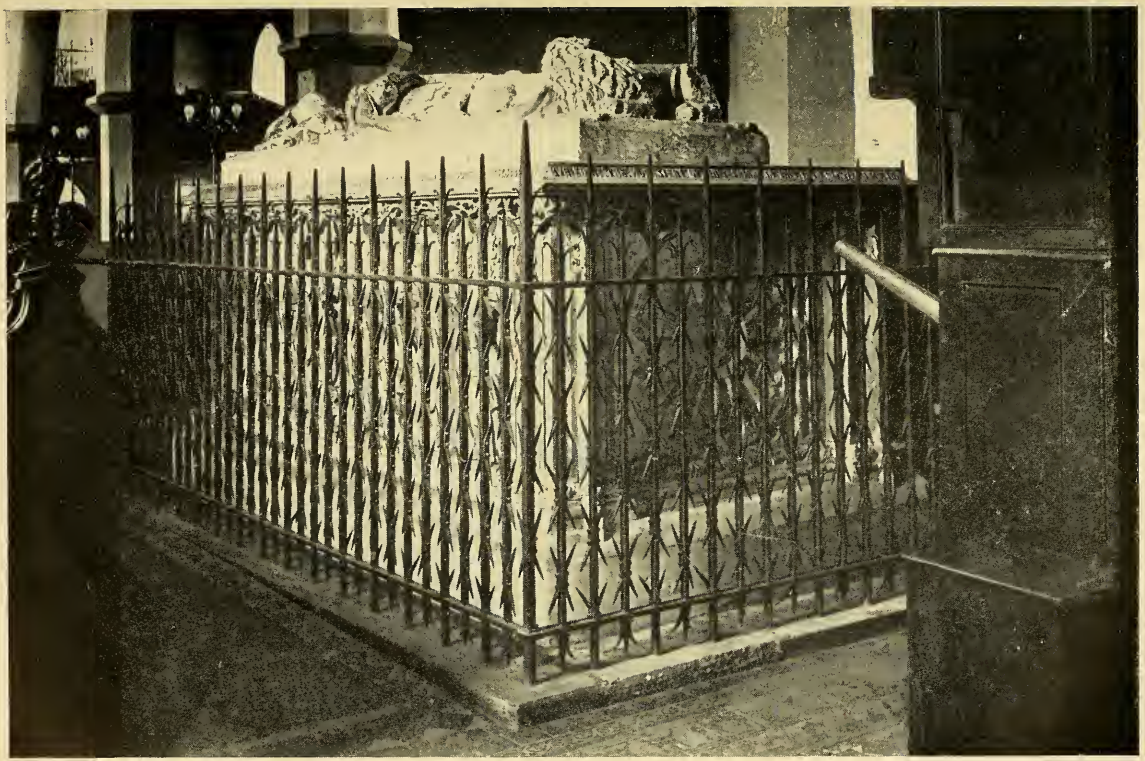


PLATE LIV. TOMB OF SIR RHYS AP THOMAS

*Photo D. Williams, Carmarthen*

at last Henry and Richard were about to meet, Sir William Stanley, who had long been a doubtful quantity, joined forces with Henry. The direct result of the fight is known to all. Richard was slain wearing the crown which at the end of the day Lord Stanley placed on Henry's brow. The indirect result was the end of anarchy and the commencement of the Rule of Law, and, for Wales, union with England and the decline of lawlessness.

## Union and Law

It has sometimes been stated that in view of the aid which Henry VII derived from Wales, of his Welsh blood and Welsh friendships, this first of the Tudors did little for his native country. It is difficult, however, to see how, as King of England, occupying a somewhat shaky throne, he could have done more. He and his immediate successors, though they united Wales to England, gave the Welsh the political advantages of Englishmen; they fostered Welsh trade, they attacked the seigneurial jurisdictions and strove to put down lawlessness. Perhaps the greatest good which Henry did for Wales was the establishment of the Council of Wales and the Marches, although we hardly agree with Mr. H. T. Evans when he says that "the establishment of this Court . . . practically sums up the work of Henry VII on behalf of Wales."

According to Miss Skeel,[1] this council arose out of the Prince's Council which had existed ever since the time of the first English Prince of Wales for the purpose of administering his estates. As such, of course, it had originally no authority in the marches. This had been given it from time to time by commissions, and marcher jurisdiction was facilitated by the fact that Edward IV, a Mortimer, was at once king of England and the most important marcher lord. At first it was a temporary council sitting at Shrewsbury. It was made permanent and its jurisdiction was extended and its place of meeting fixed at Ludlow in the reign of Henry VII. An Act

[1] We have frequently consulted Dr. Skeel's *The Council of the Marches of Wales*, as being the best of the recent studies on this important court.

of 1543 gave it a statutory basis, and in Henry VIII's time its members were the Lord President, the Chief Justice of Chester, and three justices of Wales, together with certain co-opted members who were chosen by the Lord President, and who were required to possess the qualification of knowing law.

The Council possessed very wide jurisdiction. Its procedure was a mixture of the Star Chamber system by question and the Chancery practice. It had the power to subject suspected felons to torture.

It was under the presidency of Rowland Lee (1534–43) that this court reached its greatest power. Lee was possessed of some of the savagery of the later Jeffreys, and is credited with having hanged 5000 men in six months. We find him writing as follows at the commencement of his labours: "I intend after Easter to stop for a month at Presteigne among the thickest of the thieves, and shall do the king such service as the strongest of them shall be afraid to do." Nine years later he was still chasing outlaws and hanging thieves, but his rigour had its effect.[1] Wales gradually settled down, gave up the "routs and confederacies" of which complaints had been made from the Statute of Gloucester in 1378 onward, disgorged its gangs of cut-throat outlaws, and turned from open theft to buying and selling. The Welsh ceased to be brigands and became citizens.

We thus see that the Council of Wales and the Marches, which lingered on until 1689, was in its early years doing good service. It was stamping out lawlessness. Its work was aided and Wales was drawn nearer to England by the Act of Union of 1535. This Act, which has been truly described as one of the most important statutes in Welsh history, was the work of Thomas Cromwell. In the words of the preamble, it provided that "Wales shal be stonde and contynue for ever fromhensforthe incorporated united and annexed to and with this Realme of Englande; and that all

[1] A curious result, we may say, for nothing is more evident than the fact that, as a rule, crime increases as rigour of punishment increases.

and singular psonne and psonnes borne and to be borne in the said Principalitie Countrey or Dominion of Wales, shall have enjoye and inherite all and singular fredomes libties rightes privileges and lawes within this Realme and other the Kynges Dominions as other the Kinges Subjects naturally borne within the same." In particular the old Welsh law of inheritance was abolished (save that lands in Wales remained partable), primogeniture was established, English law applied equally to both countries. The lordship marches were annexed to the newly created shires of Monmouthshire, Brecknockshire, Radnorshire, Montgomeryshire, and Denbighshire, and several of the older Welsh counties were increased in size. Seven years later the counties were divided into hundreds and the English local government system was established. The administration of justice in Wales was also developed on the English plan, though worthy customs of Wales were preserved. All courts were ordered to be kept in the English tongue, and all officers were required to speak English. The English circuit system was not, however, extended to Wales, for Henry VIII gave the Principality its own High Court of Justice, the ' King's Great Sessions,' which was not abolished until 1830. Finally, and mainly, the Act of Union gave Wales adequate representation in Parliament: one knight from each shire and one burgess from each shire-town (except Merioneth). Monmouthshire had two knights as shire members. In 1542 Haverfordwest was made a county and given one member.

It must not, of course, be thought that Wales now for the first time sent members to the English Parliament. We have a writ, *De Wallensibus ad Parliamentum apud Eborum venire faciendis*, dated April 18, 15 Ed. II, addressed to Arundel, Justiciary of Wales, directing the return of twenty-four members from North and South Wales to the Parliament to be held at York on May 2, 1322, and although the returns to this writ have been lost it is probable that the members were in fact returned. Again, we have another writ dated January 8, 1327, to which there was a return. After that, however,

there is a hiatus until the Act of Union. From 1536 [1] Welsh representation was as continuous as English, except for a break at the time of the Civil War. In 1832 the number of Welsh members was increased from twenty-seven to thirty-two, and a further increase of one member was made in both 1867 and 1885. Welsh representation has been noted for the continuity of representation by particular houses, especially the Herberts and the Wynns. It is only within recent years that Welsh constituencies have been captured by non-Welshmen.

The coming of the Tudors is thus seen to have advanced perceptibly the political history of Wales. In another direction, however, the Principality still lagged behind her eastern neighbour. Wales was sunk in ignorance. As Mr. Evans [2] tells us, "The breach between lord and peasant which began on the accession of the Tudors . . . became more pronounced with the Act of Union." The English court called the nobles and landed classes of Wales from their fastnesses; they left the peasants to shift for themselves; they left the clergy in an age of patrons patronless; they ignored the bard and forgot the language the native poets knew. The result was a drunken, ignorant, immoral clergy, a peasant literature, and a poor peasantry. But even in this direction the light was breaking.

## The Renaissance

It is possibly an anachronism to speak of the Welsh Renaissance before the Civil War. The latter, however, we can date between definite years; the former spreads over centuries, and certainly commenced in one direction in the Tudor period. It has its roots, indeed, in times far earlier, even in the years when Vacarius was lecturing at Oxford. Thus, although it had no great effect upon Welsh thought until well on into the seventeenth century, we will consider it before touching upon the Civil War.

[1] The returns to the writs have been lost from 1536 to 1541. We follow W. R. Williams' *Parliamentary History of the Principality of Wales.*

[2] H. T. Evans, *History of England and Wales*, vol. ii.

PLATE LV. HUMPHREY LLWYD 

*From the picture in the possession of Major-General Sir Francis Lloyd, and reproduced with his permission*

# WALES AND ENGLAND UNITED

In the majestic march of human affairs there come at times moments when mankind leaps forward. The Renaissance, which had long been preparing, even before Constantinople fell, was one of these great periods. It burst in full glory upon different nations at different times. England was dazzled by the splendours which a new knowledge of Greek had opened up as early as the fifteenth century. Richard Croke was teaching Greek at Louvain before his return to Cambridge in 1518. Wales, on the other hand, was still buried in ignorance in Tudor times.[1] Indeed, the Rev. Meredith Morris in his pleasing *Renaissance of Welsh Literature* has said: "The history of Welsh literature viewed in its own light reveals nothing extraordinary or noteworthy from Dafydd ab Edmund (1450) down to Goronwy Owen (1750), either in prose or in poetry, if we except, of course, the vernacular version of the Scriptures and some half a dozen or so classics." Apart from literature, Wales was steeped in superstition and Welsh morals were regrettable. The religious movement which resulted in so many beneficial changes in England hardly touched Wales. It is true that the monasteries were swept away, but few schools were planted in their place, and although Dr. Hugh ap Rice (or Price) founded Jesus College, Oxford, in 1571, it had little effect upon the general education of the Welsh people. Such grammar schools as were founded out of the plunder of the monasteries were so ordered that they were mainly useful to the English inhabitants of Wales and the well-to-do. Printing, which had been instrumental in spreading the knowledge which the growing body of scholars in England and on the Continent were collecting, was hardly of any service to the Welsh-speaking people, for no printing-press existed in Wales until the eighteenth century. The first book printed in Welsh in Wales was *Eglurhad o Gatechism Byrraf y Gymanfa*, issued from the press set up at Trefhedyn, in Cardiganshire, and published in 1719. Previously Welsh books had been printed in London or (from 1685

[1] There were, of course, exceptions. Richard Recorde of Tenby was one of the greatest mathematicians and astronomers of the sixteenth century.

onward) in Shrewsbury. Set up thus by men not knowing the language, they were either hopelessly inaccurate or the author had to wait upon the printer—with the result that very few Welsh books were published anywhere before the middle of the eighteenth century.[1]

In this dark period of Welsh thought there were, however, a few bright stars. The translation of the New Testament by William Salesbury, and subsequently of the whole Bible by Bishops Morgan and Parry, aided by such men as Dr. Richard Davies, gave to the Welsh the greatest of books. Morgan's translation, indeed, had an effect even beyond the immediate religious result. His style, marked as it is, we are informed, by purity of diction, euphony, uniformity of dialect, and the use of language which the most unlearned could understand, marked a turning-point in Welsh literature more important by far than the Eisteddfod of Caerwys. Later on Vicar Prichard, the strong and eloquent preacher who has been referred to as "the Hogarth of the pen," gave his countrymen another great gift when he wrote the *Canwyll y Cymry*. His style might be that of the peasant, but it was vigorous and not debased, and it caught the imagination of the people.

As for religion, Wales, strangely enough, remained Catholic at heart long after England had become Protestant. During the changes under Mary and Elizabeth it would seem, indeed, that the Welsh were purely indifferent. The clergy had long ceased to have any grip upon the affections of the people. The higher clergy rarely lived in their dioceses,[2] and the lower were ignorant and dissolute. The people were given up to superstition. In time, however, Church government was cleansed, the bishoprics were adorned by such men as Morgan and Parry, and the lower clergy were gradually made more capable of performing their sacred functions. It has, however,

[1] Mr. Ballinger in a note sent to the *Athenæum* for March 5, 1915, has pointed out that a book in Welsh was printed in America in 1730.

[2] This applies, perhaps, more to the early sixteenth century than to the latter half. Bishop Bulkeley of Bangor (1541–52) was the first bishop for a hundred years or more to reside in his diocese.

to be admitted that the Church of England has never shared largely in the affections of the Welsh nation. Until the eighteenth century the Welsh leaned toward Roman Catholicism. From that time to this they have gradually become a nation of Nonconformists.

### The Civil War

At the time of the Wars of the Roses, Wales, as we have seen, was nearly equally divided between the two contending parties. With the Puritan revolution against the absolutism and Roman Catholic tendency of the Stuarts it was different. Wales was entirely Royalist save for a small portion of South Pembroke. The reasons for this unity are not too apparent. Wales, of course, was Catholic at heart, but it was by no means intensely Catholic. There had been no Welsh Pilgrimage of Grace, and the Puritans, headed by such men as Vicar Prichard and Morgan Llwyd, were beginning to make headway. The aristocracy was, it is true, advancing in importance, and relied for that advancement upon the favour of the English Government. But they were not mere courtiers, and such men as Lord Keeper Williams had all along advocated a policy of conciliation between king and Parliament. Even had the Welsh nobility favoured the Royalist cause it is not obvious why they should have carried with them the peasantry. They had largely neglected Wales; they were already forgetting the Welsh tongue, which alone was known to the peasants; they rarely traced their title directly from the ancient chiefs. The fact remains, however, that the Welsh nobles and the Welsh people were almost solidly Royalist, and throughout the struggle fought bravely and steadfastly against the Parliamentarians and the New Model army.

Wales, indeed, played a great part in the war. Such men as the Marquis of Worcester, of Raglan Castle, who devoted his great resources in money and men to the Royalist cause, and Sir John Owen of Clenenau, the Earl of Carbery, Sir Henry Vaughan, the Bulkeleys and Mostyns and Prices, rendered the greatest assistance. Even such as Laugharne, Powel,

and Poyer, who had been Parliamentarians, subsequently changed sides when the disputes between Presbyterian and Independent arose, and caused Cromwell the acutest anxiety by holding his forces before Pembroke during a long and dreary siege. Besides men Wales gave to Charles a naturally strong and almost impregnable base. Behind the Dee and the Severn, commanded, as in the old struggles against the Normans, by Chester, Shrewsbury, and Hereford, the king looked to have a safe ground in which to raise troops for victory or to retire upon in case of defeat. At the very commencement of the campaign Charles marched to Shrewsbury, and was there joined by Mostyn and Salesbury leading some five thousand Welshmen. At the same time Sir John Owen was busy gathering more, while from Flintshire and Denbighshire new armies were gathering at Wrexham.

It was in this same year (1642) that the Royalists, under Lord Herbert, gained their first victory by the taking of Cardiff Castle. Shortly afterward Charles, now strengthened by important Welsh reinforcements, turned from Shrewsbury to march on London. Of the campaign from the battle at Edgehill until the final overthrow of the Royalist party we do not intend to treat in any detail. After some successes against Sir Thomas Myddleton's castle at Chirk and near the Forest of Dean the Royalists suffered serious losses in 1643. Brereton and Myddleton, the latter one of the most energetic leaders on the Parliamentary side, captured stronghold after stronghold in North Wales with the aid of his siege artillery, an arm then almost unknown to the Welsh. Their victorious career was, however, checked by the arrival of Irish supports, who were in turn met and defeated by Sir Thomas Fairfax in the beginning of 1644.

About the same time (January 1644) Lord Carbery, having collected a considerable force in South Wales, prepared to attack the Parliamentarian stronghold of Pembroke. The attempt was unsuccessful, and Laugharne, at that time fighting against the Royalists, swept South-west Wales, capturing Haverfordwest, Tenby, Carew, and Carmarthen.

PLATE LVI. OLIVER CROMWELL'S SEAL, SHOWING FIVE WELSH QUARTERINGS

*The natural size is seen in the lower figure : the upper one is an enlarged reproduction*

As a result of this blunder Carbery was replaced by Charles Gerard, who succeeded in retaking Carmarthen and Haverfordwest and in reducing a number of other strongholds. But these successes were bitterly paid for, since Gerard's Irish levies ravaged the country and acted in such a manner toward the gentry of the south that the affection of the whole of South Wales for the Royalist cause was thoroughly shaken.

In September of the same year the Royalists of North Wales were broken at the battle of Montgomery, which resulted in the capture of Montgomery Castle, the scattering of Langdale's army, and the isolation of Shrewsbury. Gerard, meanwhile, had marched to the assistance of Rupert. Laugharne seized the opportunity to capture Cardigan, which Gerard had taken the year before, but in 1645 Gerard had his revenge, defeating in turn Sir John Price, who had been made keeper of Montgomery Castle, at Llanidloes, Myddleton near Oswestry, and Laugharne at Newcastle Emlyn. The fruit of these victories was the seizure of Llanidloes, Haverfordwest, Cardigan, Carew, and Picton Castles.

In spite of these successes Gerard's harsh treatment of the country through which he passed (friendly country, be it observed) lost more for Charles than his victories had gained. After the disastrous defeat at Naseby, when the king turned once more to Wales for recruits, he found the result of this false policy in an almost complete failure of the people to rally to his standard. Gerard was transferred from the command in South Wales to another, the disgrace being softened by the gift of a peerage.

The evil, however, had been done. Welsh loyalty to the royal cause was shaken, and Lord Astley,[1] who succeeded to Gerard's command, was looked upon with little favour. The Welsh preferred their own leaders, and deserted Astley for the 'Peace Army' which had gathered round Colonel Herbert. Meanwhile Laugharne was clearing Pembrokeshire of the enemy. Carmarthen, Monmouth, Brecon, and Newcastle Emlyn all fell before the end of the year.

[1] Sir Jacob Astley was made Lord Astley in 1644. His title was not recognized by the Parliamentarians.

The year following saw the breaking of the royal power in both North and South Wales. At the battle of Denbigh Colonel Michael Jones scattered the Irish mercenaries who were hastening from Anglesey to the relief of Chester, and thus greatly contributed to the reduction of that stronghold. With the fall of Chester the war in North Wales was practically limited to the reduction of the fortresses of Aberystwyth, Denbigh, and Harlech. In the south Laugharne had succeeded in scattering the forces raised by the Marquis of Worcester. In June of this year Carnarvon and Beaumaris were both taken from the Royalists. Ruthin had already capitulated. The first phase of the Civil War was over in South Wales when Raglan Castle surrendered on August 19. In the north the struggle dragged on a little longer. The few castles still resisting, however, eventually surrendered—Denbigh in October, and, last of all, as in the Wars of the Roses, Harlech in the March of 1647.

The disputes between the Presbyterians and the Independents now resulted in that alliance between Presbyterian Parliamentarian and Catholic Royalist against the Independents which once more plunged Wales into civil war. Glamorgan was the first to revolt, stirred up by Judge Jenkins —ever famous for his reply to the threat of the Parliament to hang him. He flouted the House to its face, declaring that he would "hang with the Bible under one arm and Magna Carta under the other." The Independents had now to face new enemies. Besides the old leaders, they found ranged against them Laugharne, Poyer, and Powel, all of whom had been prominent leaders in the Parliamentarian army, Laugharne being responsible, as we have seen, for many a Royalist defeat and the capture of many Royalist strongholds. In the north Sir John Owen had also succeeded in raising an army against the Independents. After some temporary success he was, however, defeated at Llandegai, taken prisoner, and condemned to death—a sentence which was never, in fact, carried out.

Meanwhile, in the south matters had gone equally badly for the insurgents Laugharne had been beaten by Horton at

PLATE LVII. HARLECH CASTLE

*Photo Frith*

St. Fagan's in the May of 1648. Sir Nicholas Kemeys, who had fortified Chepstow, had fallen before the assault directed by Isaac Ewer. Oliver Cromwell was laying siege to Pembroke, in which Laugharne, Powel, and Poyer, with many gentlemen of quality, were preparing to fight out their fight to the very last. After a stubborn defence this stronghold submitted on July 11, and the three leaders were captured. It was decided that one alone should die, the choice to be made by lot drawn by a little child. Two pieces of paper upon which was written 'God giveth life' were prepared. To these was added a blank sheet. The blank sheet meant death, and it was drawn for Poyer. He was shot at Covent Garden. Laugharne and Powel were exiled. The army was supreme.

It is extremely difficult to point to any great immediate result which the war had upon Wales. Eventually, of course, the destruction of the theory of Divine Right was as important to Wales as to England, but it would seem that for many years Wales kept aloof from the English movements in favour of Parliamentary government and constitutional and individual freedom of thought, of expression, and of action. In truth the Welsh were still in a state of torpor. How could they respond to the strains of Milton's *Areopagitica* when they had no native press? In one direction, however, it may be that the Civil War had a direct and immediate effect. In so far as it developed and increased the Puritan spirit it aided those Welsh reformers who already in 1639 had laid the foundations of Welsh Nonconformity.

## The Nonconformists

The Nonconformist movement in Wales commenced, we are told, with the church founded by William Wroth at Llanvaches in 1639. From that date to this present time the movement has steadily grown. At the commencement such men as Wroth, Erbury, and Cradock had a comparatively small effect upon the mass of the people. As the authors of *The Welsh People* state, "The work of these men and others (such as Vavasour Powell, Morgan Llwyd, Hugh Owen, and

James Owen) during the seventeenth century seems to have been very largely confined to the English side of Welsh life—that is to say, to the towns and more Anglicized portions of the Principality. . . . The bulk of the Welsh-speaking population was untouched by their ministrations."

The condition of the clergy of the Church of England in Wales was, however, calculated to drive the people to other spiritual advisers. The lower clergy were hopelessly underpaid, ill-educated, licentious, and lazy. The higher clergy were pluralists,[1] neglected their duties, and spent most of their time in England. It was only the mental stupor into which the peasantry had fallen which delayed the more general spreading of the Nonconformist and Independent beliefs. With the passing of the seventeenth century, the increase of literature, the labours of such bodies as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the exertions of such men as James Owen, the foundation of lending libraries, and the development of a better educational system, the Welsh mind awoke once more. It was, however, a Dissenting Wales which emerged from the dark period that had engulfed it from the time when Owain Glyndwr laid down his sword. Their very language had been preserved to the Welsh by those stern Puritans, who persisted in preaching the belief that was in them in the language of their country, and in scattering the Bible and theological works in the Welsh language among the peasantry. In later times the development of the Sunday school also encouraged the use of the native tongue. Had it not been for these movements the Welsh language might have died out long ago, for after the Act of Union, and, indeed, before, the landed classes in the main regarded it as a disgrace to speak Welsh, the clergy were mainly English or English-speaking, and the schools taught English. In a word, all the educational leaders favoured English, which was also the official language. Only those Puritan leaders who used the Welsh language as a means of touching the heart and mind of

[1] For a most outrageous example see the account of the livings held by the Luxmoore family in Clarke's *History of the Church in Wales*, p. 142.

PLATE LVIII. THE INVESTITURE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES AT CARNARVON CASTLE, JULY 13, 1911 406

*Copyright, Central News, London*

the peasant whom the others despised kept alive this ancient language as a living force.

It was not, however, until toward the end of the first half of the eighteenth century that the Methodist revival began to give Wales that religious fervour which the majority of observers believe exists in Wales to-day. It was the preaching and the living example of such men as Griffith Jones, Howel Harris, and Rowlands of Llangeitho, who, struggling against continual persecution, still fought on, that at last gained the victory for Nonconformity and Wales. The old torpor gradually disappeared, and before a century had passed the religious spirit of this ancient people, who in the years that had gone had fought so long and so valiantly successively for Druidism, the British Church, and the Catholic creed, was at last rekindled.[1]

## Conclusion

We have now reached the end of our simple history of a gallant people. Of the nineteenth century we need say but little. Wales has for many years been a loyal and increasingly important member of the English State. Her history in these later years is English history, her commercial development has grown side by side with the expansion of English commerce. Her agricultural population, though stripped in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of many valuable rights by the Inclosure Acts,[2] has shared in that prosperity

[1] History is put to an ill use when it is sought to use it to stir up opposition between different branches of the same religion. We express no opinion whatever upon the rival merits of Church and Nonconformist doctrine. Wales, however, it seems clear, was for a century after the Reformation sadly neglected by the English Church. To-day it is manifest that the majority of people in Wales are Nonconformist. These facts are certain and must be stated in a history.

[2] The reader is referred to Mr. Ivor Bowen's monograph, *The Great Enclosures of Common Lands in Wales*, for details. We may mention here that from 1760 to 1845, 3954 private Inclosure Acts were passed. In 1795, of the 5,100,000 acres in Monmouthshire and the Principality, 1,696,827 acres were unenclosed waste or common lands. In 1895, 693,628 acres only of unenclosed land existed, and of these 160,868 acres alone were capable of cultivation. This evil, which looks very like robbery, was not peculiar to Wales. England suffered equally.

To-day South Wales, which in the past was ravaged successively by Brython and Roman, Saxon and Norman, where for centuries the silent woods looked upon men struggling for liberty and mastery, has been given over to the peaceful struggles of capitalists, merchants, and labourers. Great coal industries have been founded and flourish. Important metal-works have been built and ports have been created. Universities (that dream which Glyndwr never realized) have been established in South and Mid and North Wales. In the north, though the old woollen and fulling industries have to some extent declined, other trades and manufactures have sprung up and are flourishing. In a word, Wales has grown peaceful and prosperous, litigious but law-abiding, taking her fair share in the arts, in literature, and in learning.

Thus, after a stormy history, after centuries of struggling, Wales has at last emerged victorious; a nation which, though few in numbers, has preserved a separate identity, thus confirming the prophetic words of the wise man of Pencadeir related to us by Giraldus, who, when speaking to Henry II of this country of the west, said: "Nor do I think that any other nation than this of Wales, or any other language, whatever may hereafter come to pass, shall, in the day of severe examination before the Supreme Judge, answer for this corner of the earth." Wales is still held by the Welsh people, true and loyal now to the King of England, but still a separate nation. A Prime Minister of Great Britain, speaking in that Cardiff which in the past has seen so many struggles for freedom, and speaking at a time when an unparalleled danger threatened the joint State, mirrored the thoughts of many Welshmen when he said: "Wales is a single and indivisible entity, with a life of its own, drawing its vitality from an ancient past, and both, I believe, in the volume and in the reality of its activity never more virile than it is to-day." Thus has fidelity to national ideals been rewarded.

# NOTE A

## BARROWS, CROMLECHS, DOLMENS, AND GORSEDDS

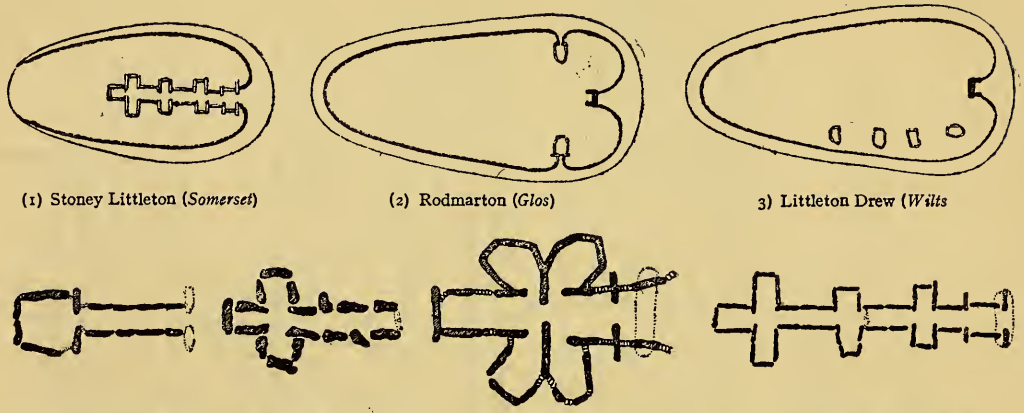
MOST of our knowledge of the early history of man is derived from the burial remains found in the ancient sepulchres. The burial-places which are called barrows are to be seen all over the world. They are found in North America, Siberia, China, and Japan, as well as in Egypt, South America, and throughout Europe. Homer has described to us a form of barrow burial, and the story of Beowulf contains a not dissimilar account.

The barrow is a generic term used in England, at any rate as early as Camden, to describe those mounds of earth which were raised to cover the stone burial chambers of Neolithic man, or in later times the cists holding the cinerary urns of the Bronze and Iron Ages. One of the most noticeable features of most barrows, apart from the earthen mound, is the encircling wall or trench—sometimes consisting merely of a shallow ditch dug in the ground and encircling the mound, sometimes consisting of fosse and earthen wall, sometimes, as at New Grange, simply a circle of stones.

The barrow, being a generic term, naturally splits up into many species, whose only point of similarity lies in the fact that in each case there is an earthen sepulchral mound. In every other respect one barrow may differ from another completely, both in point of date and in structure.

### The Long Barrow

The earliest form of barrow is the 'long' barrow. Even the long barrow divides up into two great classes: the simple,



(1) Stoney Littleton (*Somerset*) (2) Rodmarton (*Glos*) 3) Littleton Drew (*Wilts*

(4) West Kennet (*Wilts*) (5) Wayland's Smithy (*Berks*) (6) Uley (*Glos*) (7) Stoney Littleton (*Somerset*)

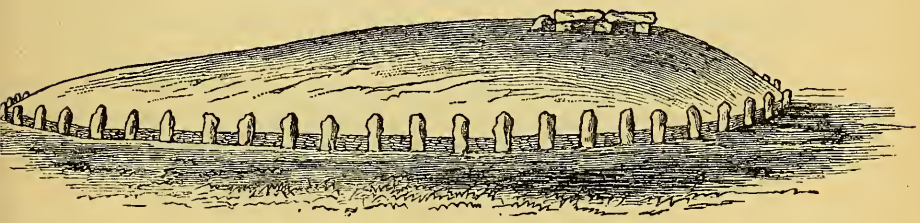
(8) Yarhouse (*Caithness*) (9) Mané Lud (*Brittany*) (10) Hammer (*Denmark*) (11) Axevalla (*Sweden*)

GROUND PLANS OF CHAMBERED LONG BARROWS, AND OF CHAMBERS CONTAINED IN THEM
From *Archæologia*, vol. xlii, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

PLATE LIX. CROMLECH NEAR THE ROMAN ROAD BETWEEN ABER AND ROE WEN

*Photo Owen Evans, Conway*

unchambered long barrow and the chambered long barrow. Both types belong to the Stone Age. In both the customary form of burial was inhumation without previous cremation. It is consequently in these long barrows that we usually find the skeletons of men more or less complete, and generally bent into a sitting posture. Unlike the round barrows, the long barrows are rarely found in groups, being usually isolated and generally occupying a commanding view. In form they are large mounds several hundred feet long, thirty or fifty or even more feet wide, and three to twelve or more feet in



LONG BARROW WITH PERISTALITH AND WALLING RESTORED
From *Archæologia*, vol. xlii, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

height. Along the sides a trench was dug, but not along the ends. Both types of barrow frequently contained hollows or cists scraped out of the floor. Cremation burial was very rare, and always explainable on the hypothesis of a second interment.

In interior form the most interesting of all the barrows is the chambered long barrow. Here the mound was heaped over a sepulchral building made of stones wedged together and covered over either by large flat stones or by an arched roof composed of stones. The plan of the chambered long barrows was, as may be seen from the illustrations given, extremely varied. In general, however, they were built in the form of a long passage opening out into one or more chambers. Around the external mound was frequently found a chain of encircling stones. The mound possessed an opening through which it was possible to enter into the very centre of the

barrow. It was in the chambers opening out from the central passage that the bodies of the dead were placed—sometimes in a stone coffin. Frequently at one end of the barrow (the broader end, for the barrow was generally smaller at one end than at the other) a single large stone was placed on end; occasionally two stones were placed almost side by side and bridged by a third.

It often happened that in the course of time the earthen covering of the chambered long barrow fell away from the interior stone chambers; these in turn were weathered away, or were robbed by neighbouring tribes in want of building material. As a result we frequently find isolated monoliths or triliths; sometimes we find circles of stones which were once the walls of the chambers of a barrow. Indeed, these stones are found in all kinds of combinations, due in many cases not to intent, but to the chances of the ages. These uncovered barrows are known as cromlechs, dolmens, or gorsedds.

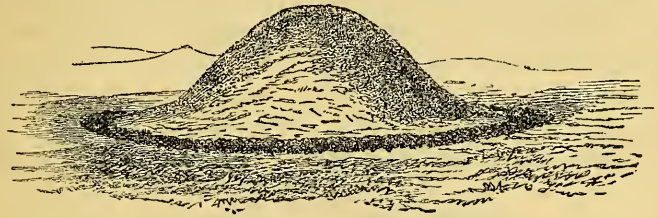
### Round Barrows

The round barrow came in, roughly speaking, with the Bronze Age, and lived on until Anglo-Saxon times. Sometimes they were bowl-shaped, sometimes bell-shaped, sometimes disk-shaped. In most cases there were several interments in the same barrow, some being inhumations, some the burial of cremation remains. The most complete description of these barrows and their interments is probably that of Mr. J. R. Mortimer, who has succeeded in filling more than 500 quarto pages with an account of his researches among the barrows of the East Riding of Yorkshire. To attempt even an analysis of the numerous accounts of these barrows is impossible in a short note such as this, but the following leading points may be made.

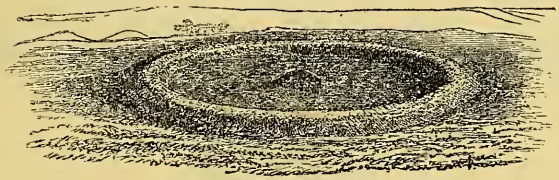
Of the various kinds of round barrow the bowl-shaped variety is by far the most common. The average height of these was from 3 to 5 feet, the diameter from 20 to 60 feet, and sometimes as much as 100 feet. The bell-shaped barrows were somewhat larger. The disk-shaped barrows

vary so greatly in size that it is almost impossible to fix an average.

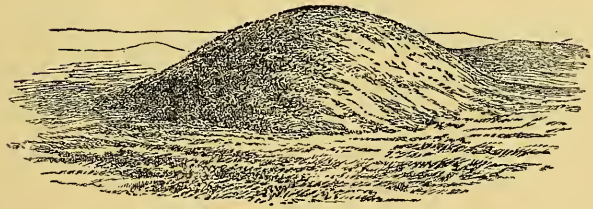
Sometimes several round barrows were grouped together, thus forming an oval barrow looking not unlike a long barrow to the casual observer.



Bell-shaped Round Barrow.



Disk-shaped Round Barrow.



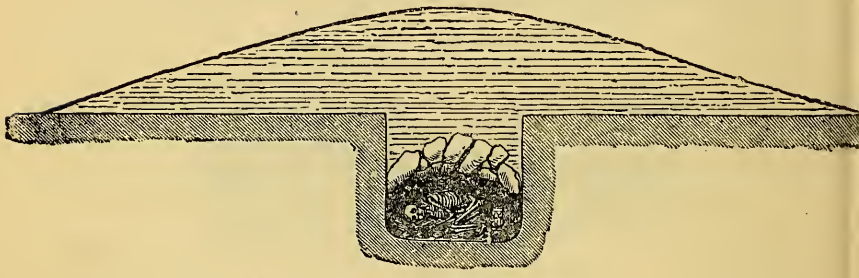
Bowl-shaped Round Barrow.

From *Archæologia*, vol. xliii, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

The interment was in the first instance generally made in the centre of the mound, the body being either placed on the ground and then covered with earth, with or without the protection of a small covering of flat stones, or deposited in a grave or hole or cist, which was later filled in, the mound then being heaped over the place of burial. Secondary interments,

however, frequently took place, and these secondary burials are in almost all cases cremation burials, the urn being frequently sunk into the sides of the mound. The primary interments are sometimes inhumations, sometimes of cremation remains in cinerary urns. It is upon this fact that we have expressed the opinion in the body of this work that the round barrows were invented by the same people who used the long barrows and were adopted by the later cremating people.

According to Dr. Thurnam, whose articles in *Archæologia* have been largely relied upon throughout this note, "When the primary interment is by simple burial, it usually consists



ROUND BARROW BURIAL, SHOWING SKELETON PROTECTED BY A COVERING OF STONES.
From *Archæologia*, vol. xliii, by permission of the Society of Antiquaries.

of a single body, though in some cases two or more have been interred together in the same barrow, which may then be regarded as a family tomb." When the corpse was placed in a grave it was generally covered over with a protecting arch of stones or clay, and in many cases the skeleton, when found, was contracted. Sometimes it is evident that the grave has been found too small to hold the corpses, and then some of the bodies have been placed above the level of the ground, the whole being covered with clay or chalk.

Attempts have been made to show that burial in round barrows was according to an astronomical plan, but it is evident from Mr. Mortimer's summary chart that no particular direction was aimed at in these burials, though, indeed, the position with the head to the east was the most common.

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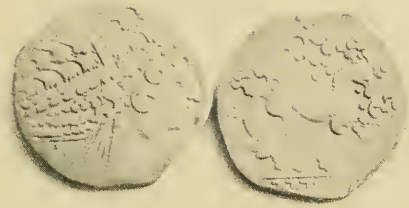

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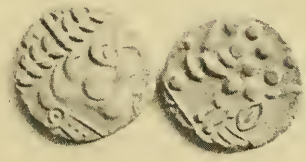

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# NOTE B

## COINS

BRITISH coins, which have been discovered in some considerable quantity in England, Wales, and Scotland—by far the greater number being found in south, south-east, and midland England, a very few in Wales, and an occasional one in Scotland—date back, according to Sir John Evans, to not earlier than 200 B.C. The earlier coins are in all cases uninscribed, so that we know nothing of the kings who coined them, and are without exception copies, sometimes close and sometimes extremely debased, of the stater of Philip II of Macedon. Philip died in 336 B.C. These coins may have been introduced into Gaul and thence into Britain after the plunder of Greece by Brennus in 279 B.C. They may have reached this island earlier or later than those coming along the usual trade routes. Pytheas may have carried an example. It is not at all probable that the debased British copies were current with Greek or Phœnician, since, apart from their rude workmanship, the heaviest British coin was thirteen grains lighter than the Macedonian stater.

When Caesar landed in Britain he found that the inhabitants used either "golden money or thin bars of iron of a certain weight which pass for money." The golden coins here referred to were probably all uninscribed coins, the inscribed coins bearing names of kings who reigned after the departure of Caesar.

The most interesting and important find of these coins was made in 1848 by a shepherd-boy at Womersh, near Guildford. He had the good fortune to light upon nineteen examples of Type 6, which were before unknown, and which, according to Sir John Evans, are a final degradation of Type 3.

The inscribed coins mark a very great advance in minting

technique. The coins shown in Plate 61 are, of course, only examples of inscribed British coins, the complete list of which is, thanks mainly to the learning and enthusiasm of Sir John Evans, a long one. Some of these coins show very considerable skill on the part of the engravers, and it is probable that the dies were of Roman and not of British workmanship. Even as early as 30 B.C. there appears to have been a powerful ruling family in Britain, for we have coins of no less than three of the sons of Commius, and from the places in which these coins have been found it would seem that this family ruled over the major portion of south and south-eastern England. The designs on some of the British coins—*e.g.* the winged head of the Medusa on some of the coins of Tincommius—might lead us to interesting speculations as to the connexion between Greek and British culture.

Plate 62 contains a few of the best examples of Roman coins noticeable as bearing the legend 'Britanniae' or as having been minted in Britain. The last two coins in this plate—those of Carausius and Allectus—were struck toward the end of the third century A.D. by self-styled Emperors of Britain. Carausius had been Count of the Saxon Shore before 287. In that year he took advantage of the weakness of the Empire and the losses due to the invasion of the Goths and declared himself Emperor in Britain. He succeeded in maintaining his position until 293. He is responsible for very many coins, some of which bear on the reverse the Roman emblems of the wolf and twins, others the lion and thunderbolt, others a woman milking a cow (representing Rome, Valour, and Fertility respectively). Carausius was eventually assassinated by one of his officers, by name Allectus. We give these coins as being examples of those struck by pseudo-emperors whose powers and pretensions were similar to those of the later Maximus (before that leader led the men of Britain to the Continent in the bold attempt to seize the Imperial purple) and (according to legend, Nennius, and the historio-romancers) Arthur. The latest coin given in Plate 62 is that of Maximian, which was struck at the Mint of London some time between the years 296–305.

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PLATE LXI. INSCRIBED BRITISH COINS

We have but few specimens of coins struck in Britain after the departure of the Romans which are in any way connected with Welsh history. So far as we know the sole example of a Welsh coin which is earlier in date than the eleventh century is the coin of Howel Dha, famous as the Welsh lawgiver. Most of the coins of the succeeding centuries found in Wales seem to have been struck in the mints attached to Norman castles. From pre-Norman times in England it was, of course, customary to have mints in very many places; practically one might say there was at least one mint in every market-town or 'port.' In Wales, where commerce was neglected for fighting, the need for coins was not felt to the same extent, with the result that few Welsh coins have been preserved to us.

PLATE 60: UNINSCRIBED COINS

*No.* 3. This is perhaps the closest British copy extant of the stater of Philip II of Macedon, which was the original from which all the uninscribed British coins were copied. A further degradation of type is seen in No. 6.

*No.* 6. Here the face is almost disappearing; the hair is becoming the chief part of the obverse design. The horse has completely disappeared.

*Nos.* 1, 2, 4, 5. These are probably later in date than No. 3, and the face of the Apollo on the obverse of the Philip stater has completely disappeared. In some the cruciform design bears some resemblance to hair bound with a fillet. As time goes on even this disappears, and at last the coin, if isolated, could not be regarded as connected in any way with the original model. The horse, however, is still evident.

PLATE 61: INSCRIBED COINS

*No.* 7. This coin bears the legend BODVO[C]. Such coins have been found near Plymouth, at Bukhill, near Dumfries, at Rodmarton and Birdlip, and at Stow, in Gloucestershire. Dr. Ingram suggested that it might be a coin of Boudicca (Boadicea). It is of heavier and finer gold than the coins of

Antedrigus, and according to Sir John Evans it is one of the earliest of the inscribed coins of the western district. According to the same authority, probably none of the series BODVOC, CATTI, COMVX, VO – CORIO – AD, ANTEBRIGV, SVEI, and INARA are earlier than the Christian era.

*No.* 8. This coin of Addedomaros has been found round Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Kent. At the latest it is as early as Tasciovanus. Addedomaros may be the Aedd Mawr of the Welsh chronicles.

*No.* 9. This is probably a coin of Vosenos, who was perhaps a contemporary of Dubnovellaunus. The inscription reads VOSII.

*No.* 10. This coin was found near Frome, in Somersetshire. Other specimens have been found in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. It bears the legend COMVX, and it is not quite clear whether this refers to a king or to a community.

*Nos.* 11, 12, 13. Sir John Evans regards these coins as more ancient than Cunobelinus—the Cymbeline of Shakespeare. They are all coins of the sons of Commius, since we find the words COMMI . F (*Commii filius*) on some examples. On the coins reproduced the legends run as follows: No. 11, obverse, VI—RI; reverse, CO . F. No. 12, reverse, EPPI F . COM. No. 13, obverse, TINC; reverse, C . F.

*No.* 11 was found at Romsey, Hants. Other examples have been discovered in Sussex. The engraving is excellent. *No.* 12. Here the obverse bears a winged Victory, probably Roman in origin. Some of this king's coins read EPPILVS. COM . F. He was Eppilus, the son of Commius, and he ruled over Kent, most probably about 30–31 B.C. *No.* 13 is a still more beautiful example of early British coinage. The engraving is not unworthy of the Greeks, and is probably the work of a Roman artist. It is a coin of Tincommius, son of Commius. Some of his coins have on the reverse a winged head of the Medusa surrounded by snakes. Tincommius coined only in gold, so far as we know; his brothers coined in gold, silver, and copper.

*No.* 14. This coin of Tasciovanus was probably minted some

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time between 30–5 B.C. Tasciovanus was a prolific minter, but notwithstanding that very many coins similar to the one illustrated were known it was not until 1844 that it was quite determined whether the TASCIO on the obverse referred to a king, a tax, or a people. In that year Mr. Birch discovered that some coins, instead of reading TASCE, as previously believed, read TASC . F, and were coins of Cunobelinus, the expanded reading of that and other coins being CVNOBELINVS . TASCIOVANNI . F, or 'Cunobeline, the son of Tasciovanus.' For the extent of Tasciovanus' dominions see the note to the next coin.

*No.* 15. Legend: obverse, CA—MV; reverse, CVNO. This coin of King Cunobelinus, or Cymbeline, is one of many issued by that king. Out of the fifty-one British coins given in the *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, thirty-six are of Cunobeline, and Sir John Evans gives many more. This particular coin, which was one of the commonest of the many types issued by Cunobelinus, is particularly interesting, since it bears the name of the place where it was minted, viz. Camulodunum, the later Colchester. Cunobelinus was the son of Tasciovanus, and ruled about the time of Christ over the greater part of south-eastern Britain, including Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Nottinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Middlesex, and Kent.

PLATE 62: ROMANO-BRITISH COINS

*No.* 16. A sestertius of Hadrian. Minted A.D. 119–138. Britannia personified.

*No.* 17. A medallion of Commodus, A.D. 185. Britannia personified.

*No.* 18. A coin of Maximian, A.D. 296–305, struck at the Mint of London.

*No.* 19. Aureus of Carausius, Emperor in Britain A.D. 286–293.

*No.* 20. Aureus of Allectus, Emperor in Britain A.D. 293–296.

A splendid find of over 5000 Roman bronze coins was made in 1873 on the Little Orme, in North Wales. Practically all the coins are of the period 305–310, and the extent of the output of the London mint (in which they were struck) is shown by the fact that hardly two of the coins are from the same die. It is believed that this hoard represents the military chest of the Roman station which commanded the pass at Penrhyn. The reader is referred for details to *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 6th Series, vol. ix, p. 381.

### Plate 63 : Welsh and Norman Coins

Comparatively few Welsh coins have come down to us, most of those which we possess having been coined for Wales rather than minted by Welsh princes. In Plate 63 we give some examples of Saxon, Welsh, and Norman coins found in or near Wales. By far the most interesting coin shown is No. 1, which bears on its obverse the inscription + **HOPÆL REX ·.-E** and on its reverse **GILLYŽ**. According to Mr. Carlyon-Britton this is a coin of Howel Dha, the **-E** being **C** with a mark of contraction through the upright stroke and intended for 'Cymriorum.' The moneyer was Gillyz, and we know that a minter Gillys coined for Eadgar at Chester and Hereford. Nos. 2 and 3 are coins of Eadmund, No. 2 being made by the moneyer Maeldomen at Chester, and No. 3 by Afra at Derby. Nos. 5 and 6 are other Gillyz coins. Nos. 6 and 7 are Norman coins minted at Rhuddlan. The rest are also examples of Norman coins.

PLATE LXIII. WELSH AND NORMAN-WELSH COINS

*From the "Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion," 1908–9. by permission*

# NOTE C

## WELSH MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

THE ancient Welsh musical instruments were seven in number: the telyn, or harp; the crwth, a crude type of violin; the pib-corn, or horn-pipe; the bagpipe; the tabwrdd, or drum; the corn-buelin, or bugle-horn; and, lastly, that elementary instrument mentioned by Davydd ap Gwilym and now known as the Jew's harp, this being a corruption of the ancient name, 'jaw's harp.'

The harp is, of course, a very ancient instrument. When the Welsh harp was first formed is unknown, but the harp in one form or another goes back beyond the days of the Psalmist. In Wales it was extremely popular, and every household possessed its harp and harper. According to Giraldus, it was customary for a guest to be entertained on his arrival "with the conversation of young women and with tunes on the harp." In the time of Davydd ap Gwilym it would appear that the harp was strung either with leather or hair strings. He shows a strong predilection for the hair-strung harp, speaking with contempt of the "din of this leathern harp." The hair used was not bleached, like the modern catgut, but was left in its natural colour. Strings of the requisite strength were obtained by plaiting. According to the Welsh laws bards were only required to use the hair-strung harp before taking their degree; afterward they were allowed to play on the leathern harp. Edward Jones, who wrote a treatise on Welsh musical instruments which was published in an enlarged form in 1794, related that a friend of his, William Williams, had a leathern harp when a boy. The body of it was hollowed or scooped out of a piece of wood and covered over with an

ox's skin, which was sewed very tightly at the back. The pegs were made of bone or ivory. Another old Welsh harp seen by the same writer (it was then 200 years old) had one row of strings, thirty-three in number. It was 4 feet 9 inches high, and was made of sycamore wood, except the sound-board, which was of deal. Davydd Benwyn, writing in 1584, gives "twenty-nine strings or more" as the compass of the harp. It would seem that the old Welsh harp extended from G, the first line in the bass, to D in alt.

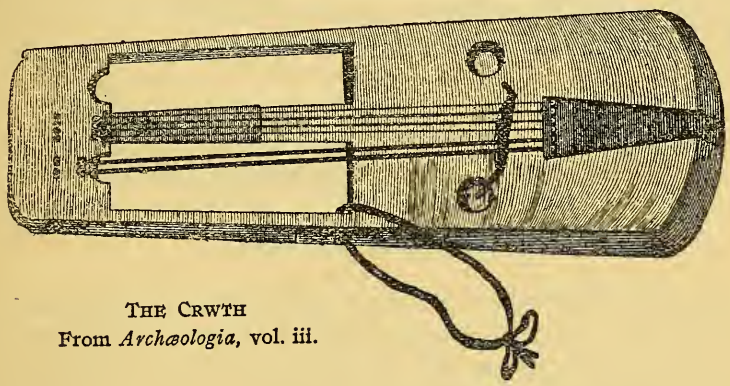
The single harp was the earliest form, and in ancient times was probably small in size. In course of time the double harp was invented. Sion Eos, the bard, writing about 1450, mentions a triple-stringed harp. The double harp contained from fifty to sixty strings, the triple harp as many as seventy-five. Jones said that he had seen a painting showing a triple harp with only fifty-seven strings; on the other hand, he had seen a modern triple harp with more than a hundred. In his day the triple harp had a compass of five octaves and one note. He adds: "The two outside rows are the diatonics, which are both tuned in unisons and in any key that the performer means to play in; the treble row of them consists of twenty-seven strings; that is, from A in alt down to C in the bass; and the opposite row, or unisons (which are played with the bass hand), extends from A in alt as low as double G in the bass, which is thirty-seven strings; and the middle row, being the flats and sharps, extends from alto G sharp down to double B natural in the bass, consisting of thirty-four strings. All the three rows together amount to ninety-eight strings." The Welsh harp had, we believe, no pedal. When being played it was inclined against the left shoulder; the treble was played with the right hand and the bass with the left.

The crwth was the subject of a paper sent as long ago as 1770 to the Society of Antiquaries by the Hon. Dennis Barrington. He tells us that at that time there was but one man in the whole principality who could play on it. His name was John Morgan, of Newburgh, in Anglesey. The

crwth is supposed to be an early form of violin, though in fact the two instruments are very different. As early as 1460 we find it placed in juxtaposition to the fiddle, for in *Libeaus Disconus* the following passage occurs:

> With sytole, sautrye yn same,
> Harpe, fydele and crouthe.

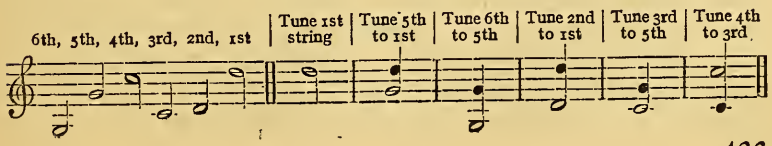
The crwth possessed six strings, two being touched by the thumb. It had a flat bridge, so that all the strings must of



THE CRWTH
From *Archæologia*, vol. iii.

necessity have been struck at once. One end of the bridge went through the hole in the belly of the instrument and acted as sound-post. According to Jones, the crwth was a pleasant-toned instrument, commonly used in olden times as a tenor accompaniment to the harp.

The method of tuning was entirely different from that adopted in the case of the violin, which is tuned in fifths. The strings of the crwth and the method of tuning them, according to Jones, were as follows:



It was, of course, played with a bow, which was short and very bowed. It seems to have been common in Wales and on the border, and Butler could deem it necessary to introduce a crowder into *Hudibras* (he had probably heard them while staying at Ludlow Castle). Of famous performers on the instrument the name of Rhys Grythor, who lived about 1580, has been preserved to us. The instrument itself dates back at least as far as Giraldus.

The pib-corn was still being played when Barrington and Jones were writing. Barrington says, however, that it was hardly used in any other part of Wales except Anglesey. In his time a Mr. Wynn of Penkescedd gave an annual prize

THE PIB-CORN
From *Archæologia*, vol. iii.

to the best performer on the instrument, and Barrington himself had heard one of the prize-winners. He describes the tone as being very "tolerable." He also tells us that it "resembles an indifferent hautbois." It was probably called a horn-pipe because both its extremities were made of horn. It was a reed instrument. Jones tells us that it was played by the shepherds in Anglesey, "and tends greatly to enhance the innocent delight of pastoral life."

The bagpipe was not, of course, by any means peculiar to Wales. It was probably developed from a more simple instrument blown directly from the mouth. Iolo Goch, writing about the time of Glyndwr, mentions it.

The drum and the jaw's or Jew's harp require no comment. The bugle-horn is an ancient instrument obtaining its name from the buffalo. The buffalo-horn was much prized in the time of Howel, but rather as a drinking-vessel than as a potential instrument of music.

Giraldus has several things to say of Welsh music. Accord-

ing to him (we quote from Sir Richard Colt Hoare's translation), "Their musical instruments charm and delight the ear with their sweetness. . . . It is astonishing that in so complex and rapid a movement of the fingers the musical proportions can be preserved, and that throughout the difficult modulations on their various instruments the harmony is completed with such a sweet velocity, so unequal an equality, so discordant a concord, as if the chords sounded together fourths or fifths. They always begin from B flat and return to the same, that the whole may be completed under the sweetness of a pleasing sound. They enter into a movement and conclude it in so delicate a manner, and play the little notes so sportively under the blunter sounds of the bass strings, enlivening with wanton levity, or communicating a deeper internal sensation of pleasure, so that the perfection of their art appears in the concealment of it:

> Art profits when concealed,
> Disgraces when revealed.

From this cause, those very strains which afford deep and unspeakable mental delight to those who have skilfully penetrated into the mysteries of the art, fatigue rather than gratify the ears of others, who seeing, do not perceive, and hearing, do not understand; and by whom the finest music is esteemed no better than a confused and disorderly noise, and will be heard with unwillingness and disgust."

In his time the chief instruments were the harp, pipe, and crwth, and it is very evident from other parts of his works that the harp was an ever-present joy in the ordinary Welsh household, and that the crwth was a highly esteemed though secondary instrument. The pipe does not appear to have been equally popular. To-day, of course, the crwth has been completely superseded by the violin. The Welsh harp, however, still lives on, though it is now similar in appearance to the English harp, but much smaller. It is differently tuned. The writer was once fortunate enough to hear a well-known Welsh harpist play on a Welsh harp made by

himself. It was in the chief room of a small inn in a typical Welsh village. The company was composed mainly of Welsh farmers, and many could not speak English. In this very Welsh setting the harper struck the strings of his instrument. Player and instrument combined to produce a result not merely pleasing, but delightful.

# WELSH SEALS

THE following seals are preserved in the British Museum, and are described in Mr. W. de Gray Birch's *Catalogue of Seals*.

The figures in brackets refer to the number in the *Catalogue*. The spellings have not been altered.

[771] Oliver Cromwell's signet seal, showing five Welsh quarterings. (Illustration faces p. 402; description, p. xxxiv.)

[820] John Tippetot, first Baron Tiptoft and Powys.

[1407] Roland Merrick, Bishop of Bangor, 1559–66.

[1859] Nicholas ap Gurgant, Bishop of Llandaff, 1148–83.

[1865] [1870] Henry of Abergavenny, Bishop of Llandaff, 1193–1218.

[2541] Henry, Abbot of Aberconway; fifteenth century.

[3669] Abbot's first seal of Neath Cistercian Abbey, Glamorgan.

[3954] Chapter seal of College of St. Mary's, St. David's.

[4117],[4118] Seal of Cistercian Abbey of Strata Marcella.

[4193], [4194] Seal of Cistercian Abbey of Tintern.

[5547] Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, Prince of North Wales ('the Great'). (Illustration faces p. 318; description p. xxxi.)

[5549] Edward, first (English) Prince of Wales. (Illustration faces p. 358; description p. xxxiii.)

[5617] Madog ap Griffin of Strata Marcella; twelfth century.

[5803] Pain of Chaworth; 1270.

[5804] Ranulf, third Earl of Chester, 1119–28. (There are other seals of the Earls of Chester.)

[5833] One of the Clares' seals.

[5944] Cadwallon ap Caradog; *c.* 1200.

[5946] Morgan ap Caradog (of Aberafan); twelfth or thirteenth century.

[5957] Madog ap Gruffydd ; 1228 ; co. Montgomery.
[5971] Conan f. Heliae ; late twelfth century.
[5977] Howel ap Cadwallon of Dolgeneu ; late twelfth century
[5980] Leisan ap Morgan.
[6052] Morgan Gam of Aberafan.
[6161] A Lacy seal.
[6235] Simon de Montfort's seal.
[6567], [6670], [6682] March or Welsh lady's seals.

Owain Glyndwr's Great and Privy Seals are now preserved in Paris. They are described in *Archæologia*, vol. xxv, and are illustrated *ante*, p. 378.

## SELECTION OF IMPORTANT DATES

3600–1300 B.C. (*c.*). Circles and avenues built.
2000 B.C. (*c.*). Commencement of Bronze Age in Albion.
1000 B.C. (*c.*). First Goidels (Gaels) arrive in Albion.
300 B.C. (*c.*). Brythonic conquest of Albion.
100 B.C. (*c.*). Late Celtic art reaches its zenith.
55 B.C. Caesar's first landing.
50–1 B.C. British inscribed coins being struck.
A.D. 43 Aulus Plautius commences the Roman conquest of Britain.
74–78. Julius Frontinus reduces the Silures and Ordovices of Wales.
286–293. Carausius Emperor in Britain.
383. Maximus (Maxen Wledig) leads the men of Britain against Gratian.
400 (*c.*). Cunedda Wledig conquers Gwynedd.
409. Saxon and Angle invasion becomes of serious proportions.
429. Britons win the Hallelujah Battle.
441–449. Saxons establish themselves permanently in Britain.
450 (*c.*). Vortigern rules.
504–516 (*c.*). Battle of Mount Badon; Gildas born; Arthur, the legendary king of the Britons, flourishes.
571. Battle of Deorham separates Welsh from the men of Cornwall (the West Welsh).
584. Battle of Fethan-lea; Ceawlin beaten back from Cheshire.
613 (*c.*). Battle of Chester separates Welsh from the Britons of Strathclyde.
617 (*c.*). Cadwallawn, the devastator of Northumbria and ally of Penda, commences to rule over Gwynedd.
633. Cadwallawn wins victory of Hatfield Chase (Heathfield).

664–683 (*c.*) (probably 664). Cadwalader, last of the kings of Britain, dies of the plague.
844. Rhodri Mawr succeeds Merfyn Frych.
850 (*c.*). Norse and Danes begin to ravage Wales.
928 (*c.*). Howel Dha's laws compiled.
950. Howel Dha dies.
1039. Gruffydd ap Llywelyn succeeds Iago.
1063. Harold Godwinson plans Gruffydd's death.
1066. The Normans.
1070. Bleddyn sole Prince of Powys.
1075. Gruffydd ap Cynan; reigned intermittently between 1075 and 1137 (lived 1054–1137).
1081. Battle of Mynydd Carn.
1100 (*c.*). Geoffrey of Monmouth born.
1137–70. Owain Gwynedd leader of the Welsh.
1140 (*c.*). Walter Map born.
1147 (*c.*). Giraldus Cambrensis born.
1170–97. The Lord Rhys leader of the Welsh (born 1132).
1197–1200. Llywelyn and Gwenwynwyn.
1200–40 (*c.*). Llywelyn the Great becomes the chief prince in Wales.
1216. Welsh Parliament meets at Aberdovey.
1233. Llywelyn overruns South Wales.
1240–46. David, Gruffudd, and Henry III at feud.
1246–58. Llywelyn's rise to power.
1258. Welsh chieftains take oath of fidelity to Llywelyn.
1282. Edwardian Conquest; death of Llywelyn.
1283. David ap Gruffudd put to death.
1294. Madog's rebellion.
1322. First Welsh members returned to Parliament.
1349. The Black Death.
1359. Owain Glyndwr born.
1400. Owain Glyndwr rebels.
1403. Battle of Shrewsbury.
1415 (*c.*). Owain Glyndwr dies.
1485. Bosworth Field; Henry Tudor ascends the English Throne.

## IMPORTANT DATES

1534–43. Rowland Lee president of the Council of Wales.
1535. Act of Union passed.
1536. Welsh Parliamentary representation becomes constant.
1639. Commencement of Nonconformist movement.
1642. Civil War commences.
1647. Harlech Castle falls.
1719. First Welsh book printed in Wales.
1760–1845. Inclosure Acts mainly passed.

# INDEX

In using the Index the following points may usefully be borne in mind: *ae* and *a* ('Caer' and 'Car'); *Cy* and *Ki* ('Cydweli' and 'Kidwelly'); *f* and *v* ('Dyfed' and 'Dyved'); *g* and *c* ('Madog' and 'Madoc'); *y* and *i*, *o*, *e* ('Tywi,' 'Towi'; 'Dynefwr,' 'Dinevor'; 'Meirionydd,' 'Merioneth'); *dd* and *th*; *o* and *w*, are to some extent interchangeable in Welsh spelling, though a consistent spelling of the same word, unless for good reason, has been adopted in the present book.

Contractions used: ap = son of; vz = daughter of.

Pronunciations: *dd* = soft *th* in English. *Ll* = *thl* (soft). *g* in such words as Madog = *ck* or hard *c*; *e.g.* Madog = 'Maddock.' *c* is always hard. *f* = *v*. *ff* = *f*. *w* = long *o*. The stress is on the penultimate; *e.g.* Cadwgan = 'Cadō'gan.'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